

SAN CARLOS DAM APPROPRIATION.

S P E E C H

OF

HON. J. F. WILSON,

OF ARIZONA,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Tuesday, February 26, 1901.

WASHINGTON.

1901.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

SPEECH
OF
HON. J. F. WILSON,
OF ARIZONA.

The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. 12904) making appropriations for the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department, and for fulfilling treaty stipulations with various Indian tribes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1902, and for other purposes—

Mr. WILSON of Arizona said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The discussion that has just gone on, the argument that has just been made in opposition to this appropriation, which is to be given to construct a dam, ostensibly for the Pima Indians on the San Carlos Reservation, and take them off the expense list of the Government, has proceeded upon a line of supposed facts that do not exist. The gentleman has made statements—of course, they must be hearsay, because they are not, as a matter of fact, true—and my purpose shall be to try to controvert some of them. Now, the merit of the proposition is plain when the facts are known. First, it is plain, because it will be humane for the Indians themselves, and, secondly, it will be a piece of business economy on the part of the Government. This question has been before the Committee on Irrigation of Arid Lands for nearly two years. Hearings upon top of hearings have been had by that committee, with a view of obtaining complete knowledge of the facts back of the proposition that the dam should be built. After exhausting the testimony on that subject and an investigation of all the facts, the committee has reached the conclusion which is formulated in the report, which I will read as a part of my argument.

Your committee find that the Indians known as the Pima Indians are located on the Sacaton Indian Reservation, on the Gila River, in the Territory of Arizona, some 20 miles below Florence, in Pinal County. They and other Indians with them, mainly dependent upon the products of the soil coming from that reservation, are in number about 8,000. These Indians from time immemorial have occupied this particular section, now known as the Sacaton Reservation, which contains about 50,000 acres of land, 30,000 of which is the most productive soil of the valley, and have supported themselves by agriculture by utilizing for irrigation the waters of Gila River. They have always been the friends of the American people, and at times, when the savage warrior made it dangerous for the Americans and pioneers in that country to be there at all, because of their cruel warfare, they became the defender of the white man against the fierce Apache, and their reservation was a safe retreat for him; and now their chief boast is that not one of their tribe has ever stained his hands in white man's blood.

Mr. STEELE. I want right there to ask the gentleman if it is not a fact that the Pima Indians have been living on the lands referred to a great many years: that they were at peace with the whites, had irrigated their own lands, and cared for themselves, and these white men that the Indians had befriended had come in and stole their water rights?

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. I do not understand that to be the fact.

Mr. STEELE. Well, I do.

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. You have not studied the facts as the committee have that has passed on this matter.

Mr. STEELE. Because the gentleman states it is not the fact does not make it any the less true.

TC
557
.A7
C695x

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. I make the statement as the committee found.

As civilization progressed and that country became settled, the lands of the Gila River have been taken up by the white settlers above this reservation, who bought them from the Government, which lands carried water rights, etc., and they have appropriated the waters of the river as they flow naturally down the stream, until now these Indians have not sufficient water to irrigate exceeding from one to two thousand acres of their land in the dry seasons. With sufficient water, which they crave so much, to irrigate the lands which they desire to put into cultivation and to till, these Indians would be able to cultivate and raise products of the soil sufficient to pay all of the expenses to which the Government has been put on their account, and to create a sinking fund in the Treasury besides. In other words, it would take them off the expense list entirely, and that is great.

And if the Government has the right to convey these lands to the white settlers, who take them up and make them homes for the people, it has the right also as guardian of these Indians to make the lands sufficiently productive to take the Indians off the expense list of the Government, which now costs about \$71,000 a year.

Mr. CURTIS. What does the gentleman say it costs—\$71,000?

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. Last Congress appropriated \$30,000.

Mr. CURTIS. And only \$7,000 was used.

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. Do you not know that they cost twice that, with other contingent expenses?

Mr. CURTIS. They have an agency on the reservation, which would cost six or eight thousand dollars, and they have a school; but the Indians only cost us \$7,000.

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. I am told by those who have control of the Indians that their total expense to this Government, direct and contingent, amounted to nearly \$71,000. Of course I do not know.

Mr. CURTIS. I suppose you took into consideration the fort, with probably one troop of cavalry?

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. There is not one fort nearer than 100 miles.

Mr. CURTIS. There is a military post there; and it is said it will be destroyed if you build this dam.

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. On this point I desire to say this—

Mr. SHAFROTH. Finish reading your report.

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. I suppose I had better do that.

The Government of the United States now has appropriated through Congress \$30,000 for their maintenance, simply to feed them, while the other expenses which the Government must bear on their account amounts to about \$33,000 a year, making the expense about \$70,000 every year that the Government must bear on account of these Indians, all of which would be avoided if this dam should be erected and the reservoir constructed as provided in the bill.

That it is practical and would be profitable to the Government to build this dam seems to have been established by the Government's experts who have investigated the facts concerning it. The preliminary report published in Senate Doc. No. 27, Fifty-fourth Congress, second session, and also in Water-Supply and Irrigation Paper No. 33, lately published by the Geological Survey, show plainly and conclusively that it is practical and that it would be profitable to build this dam, and that it should be built and this reservoir constructed.

Your committee also find it to be an established fact that the dam when built to the height of 150 feet, which it may be, will hold when full 247,000 acre-feet, or water enough to cover that number of acres a foot deep. If raised 70 feet higher, which it may be, it would contain 550,000 acre-feet.

Mr. CURTIS. You know it takes 2 acre-feet to irrigate 1 acre of land.

Mr. WILSON of Arizona. In some cases. You may waste 4 feet; you may get along with 2, or you can get along in an economical way with less.

This outlay will cost a little less than \$1,000,000 or not exceed that amount, the amount carried in this bill. When completed there will be water enough

saved for distribution, on an economic basis, in the dry season when water is needed, that could not be obtained from the stream, to irrigate the 30,000 acres of easy irrigable lands.

That it is practical and would be profitable to the Government to build this dam seems to have been established by the Government's experts who have investigated the facts concerning it. The preliminary report published in Senate Doc. No. 27, Fifty-fourth Congress, second session, and also in Water-Supply and Irrigation Paper 33, lately published by the Geological Survey, show plainly and conclusively that it is practical and that it would be profitable to build this dam, and that it should be built and this reservoir constructed.

Your committee also find it to be an established fact that the dam when built to the height of 150 feet, which it may be, will hold when full 247,000 acre-feet, or water enough to cover that number of acres a foot deep. If raised 70 feet higher, which it may be, it would contain 550,000 acre-feet. This outlay will cost a little less than \$1,000,000 or not exceed that amount, the amount carried in this bill. When completed there will be water enough saved for distribution, on an economic basis, in the dry season when water is needed, that could not be obtained from the stream, to irrigate the 30,000 acres of easy irrigable land of the Indians to the effect heretofore stated, and have a surplus of water sufficient to irrigate at least 140,000 acres besides.

This surplus would be at hand were the dam raised but 150 feet; and when raised 70 feet higher that surplus would be nearly enough to irrigate a half million acres. There would be sufficient water in this surplus, at a fair price, far below what white settlers now pay for water rights, to place all of their lands already purchased in a high state of cultivation, and to reach and reclaim much of the now Government land undisposed of, which might be disposed of to the white settlers at a reasonable price per acre with the water rights attached. These, all taken together, would reimburse the Government for its outlay in less than ten years. This being done would take the Indians off of the expense list of the Government—they would be made self-sustaining. Hundreds of thousands of acres of now idle land would be reclaimed and hundreds of homes made for the white settlers, and great wealth thereby added to the already existing wealth of the country.

These facts seem to be well established—indeed, uncontroverted.

These findings certainly establish the merit of this proposition, placed on the basis of a policy toward the Indians alone.

But, on the general topic I maintain the Government should reclaim its arid lands, and on this I say that money expended for the reclamation of arid lands will result in a still greater growth and a still greater development, greater production of wealth than any other single enterprise in which the Government may embark. I have the data here, the figures showing what has heretofore been expended on other enterprises less important than this one.

Therefore, by your consent, and having your undivided attention, appearing for that brave people in my portion of the West who braved the dangers of the West, then inhabited by savage tribes, living under the burning sun, where the bird was without song, and who put their hands on the savage mane and led him from bloody plains of savage warfare to safe fields of industry and homes of civilized quiet peace, I proceed to the detailed statement of facts and give them as reasons why the Government should undertake to reclaim these arid lands. I submit also that these facts, grouped as argument, are more cogent and strong than any facts and arguments that were ever offered at the beginning of the governmental action in building internal canals for internal commerce.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as before stated, I apprehend that anyone who has not given particular attention to this question has no idea of the amount of land to be disposed of by the General Government. The Land Department, up to a few years ago, had not the slightest conception of it itself. Only about twenty-five years ago we heard from the Secretary of the Interior that there were perhaps 10,000,000 acres of public lands for sale; and yet since that time there have been over 150,000,000 acres sold, more than twice the area of the Republic of France; and since the investigation has been carried to its limit it has been found that there

are more than 567,000,000 acres of Government lands subject to its disposition to-day.

Of that 567,000,000 acres of public lands subject to the disposition of the Government there are 541,265,248 acres of it in the arid West, in the fifteen States and Territories in the Union known as the arid region. An equal distribution of these lands among the several States, situated as they are, side by side, makes it a matter of inquiry as to whether or not it is not policy for the nation to take charge of them and place them in condition for sale to possible home seekers of the Union, in which over 76,000,000 of our people live and to whom the lands belong.

Now, I believe in equal distribution; and perhaps it is difficult to understand how the public land can be distributed in order that we may advance the theory that the distribution and reclamation of so vast a territory should be a national affair.

The reclamation of the arid lands should be by the Government.

First. Because of the immensity of the amount to be reclaimed and of its even distribution over the arid States and Territories, and because it must be reclaimed almost entirely by means of irrigation, if reclaimed at all—all in view of the fact that it is now the property of the General Government. Public opinion can hardly realize that there is now, or was at the end of the fiscal year 1899, a little more than 567,000,000 acres of public land undisposed of by the Government, yet it is true, and 541,265,248 acres of this amount is situated in the arid States and Territories and is distributed as follows:

	Acres.		Acres.
Arizona.....	54,608,531	New Mexico.....	54,720,863
California.....	50,132,241	Oregon.....	38,485,873
Colorado.....	41,988,377	North Dakota.....	19,500,855
Idaho.....	34,225,149	South Dakota.....	13,006,396
Kansas.....	734,080	Utah.....	35,231,466
Montana.....	74,558,143	Washington.....	19,068,420
Nebraska.....	10,790,332	Wyoming.....	52,055,248
Nevada.....	42,385,735		

This list shows something of an even distribution of these lands over the arid States and Territories, and in view of this fact it becomes important to know something of how much of it is subject to reclamation, and how. As to this, the most authentic means at our command is the report of the special Senate committee of the United States Senate on the reclamation of arid lands and irrigation, made to the Senate in 1890. In that they reported that there was from 100,000,000 to 150,000,000 acres of this land that could be made productive, and that only by means of irrigation—more than five times the quantity of reclaimed land in British India, from which 110,000,000 people are maintained. Some maintain that these lands should be ceded to the States and Territories. All history shows that this would be a failure. Especially is it so here.

By the acts of Congress, March 2, 1849, to the act of March 12, 1860, nearly 60,000,000 acres of land of the General Government, lying in 15 States of the Union, known as swamp lands, were ceded to the various States in which they lay. They are as follows:

	Acres.		Acres.
Alabama.....	414,310	Michigan.....	5,729,843
Arkansas.....	7,068,367	Minnesota.....	3,109,142
California.....	1,773,857	Mississippi.....	3,323,437
Florida.....	16,631,302	Missouri.....	4,495,816
Illinois.....	1,493,718	Ohio.....	25,960
Indiana.....	1,265,107	Oregon.....	315,164
Iowa.....	933,949	Wisconsin.....	3,349,132
Louisiana.....	8,968,880		

These are the beneficiary States of the swamp land grants; and they are all, with a single exception, better able, so far as monetary expenditure may be concerned, to reclaim these lands granted to them by means of the levee system (and which is but the counterpart of the reservoir and canal system necessary to reclaim the arid lands, and far less expensive) than any of the arid States and Territories are to reclaim the arid lands in their boundaries. This will not be denied by those who oppose this theory I apprehend, because through the whole space of nearly fifty years not a single one of these States has ever made a single record of success by the reclamation of any of these lands that had to be reclaimed. They mostly went into the hands of alien speculators and land sharks for naught. On the other hand, the history of other countries that have taken the matter of reclaiming their arid lands in hand as a national enterprise for their people have made a prime success of it in every instance.

1. From time immemorial Egypt has maintained her entire population on lands that Egypt reclaimed as a national enterprise, and by it, in ages past, gained the name and title "The granary of the world."

This is no failure, and is an argument in our favor. Not only so, but in British India, where famine and starvation in former days prevailed because of the shortage in the production of the soil, since the reclamation of about 26,000,000 of acres of land by the Government as a national project famine has been prevented, death from starvation has ceased, and 110,000,000 of its people are maintained from the production of the reclaimed land by the hand of the Government. This is the success recorded in history for that enterprise.

The Governments of France, Spain, Algeria, Australia, Argentine, and Peru all bear the same testimony without a break on the same point. Therefore we see that in every instance when the work was taken in hand as a national enterprise it was a success, while on the other hand, when turned into the charge of the State, in every single instance it has proved a failure, and hence we fear the dangerous course wherein this all-important matter of reclaiming the public domain has so often heretofore fallen and foundered, and cling to that which has so often carried its followers into the haven of success.

Another reason is that, in the event the States and Territories were or should be financially able to reclaim the lands, insuperable physical barriers would be so prominently in the way that it could not be made practically effectual there.

This would be due to the fact that all of the streams of any great magnitude in the West, and from which the greatest irrigation schemes would necessarily flow for the reclamation of the greatest bodies of these arid lands, have their source in Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. If these States should have the sovereign control of these lands in their boundaries, they would necessarily have the water as well, and would, as a matter of sovereign right, have the control of it, and would therefore be able to defy the law of prior appropriation as applied between individuals, and by diverting the head waters of those streams would have those States and Territories lying below them at their mercy. At least it would be so in a measure. To state these physical advantages in favor of those three sovereign communities is to argue the case on this point, in so far as I now have the time to advert to it on that point.

Again, to ask this reclamation to be made by the General Government for the people of the West would be asking only fair and impartial treatment as between them and the people of the South and East and North. It would be asking no more for the benefit of agriculture in the West than the Government has done for the benefit of inland commerce in those sections just named.

For the benefit of inland commerce in those sections the Government has appropriated from time to time as original expenditure, to say nothing of the cost of keeping up the various canals, etc., in which it had an interest, no less than \$230,850,567.60, and, as before stated, none will deny that this was wisely expended, for it was.

These expenditures have been somewhat of a local nature too, rather than national, or for the national benefit. They were as follows—that is, there has been expended for inland commerce in the boundaries of the following States the following:

Alabama.....	\$2,764,191.19	New Hampshire.....	434,990.36
Arkansas.....	784,910.28	Mississippi.....	2,323,856.10
California.....	4,181,251.78	New Jersey.....	2,068,087.26
Connecticut.....	2,696,545.19	New York.....	17,495,321.60
Delaware.....	3,223,118.44	North Carolina.....	4,046,935.07
District of Columbia.....	240,000.00	Ohio.....	5,741,812.37
Florida.....	2,511,509.05	Oregon.....	5,254,863.66
Georgia.....	3,382,538.91	Pennsylvania.....	2,451,292.25
Idaho.....	15,000.00	Rhode Island.....	1,538,214.00
Illinois.....	4,948,784.11	South Carolina.....	2,012,679.90
Indiana.....	1,869,753.03	Tennessee.....	670,089.85
Iowa.....	319,563.37	Texas.....	6,652,697.16
Kansas.....	7,561.73	Vermont.....	767,946.84
Kentucky.....	1,705,531.99	Virginia.....	3,837,643.23
Louisiana.....	9,609,451.85	Washington.....	534,232.33
Maine.....	2,483,686.66	Wisconsin.....	7,705,301.32
Maryland.....	3,790,876.83	Miscellaneous expendi-	
Massachusetts.....	4,943,767.10	ture.....	188,405,189.96
Michigan.....	3,805,167.81		
Minnesota.....	1,771,810.46	Total.....	230,850,567.60

Not only so, but in at least twenty States in the Union the Government has exercised the functions of a canal builder, not unwisely either, as before stated, and not in a single instance has it been done in any part of the vast arid West; and it has also all been done in the direct interest of commerce and not of agriculture. As evidence of this we submit the following statistics bearing on this subject:

IN GENERAL.

In the last fifty-three years Congress has expended in cleaning and improving harbors, building dams, canals, and the like work generally \$392,606,596.28.

In 1896 alone for the same purpose \$71,158,956.88 was expended.

This was all for the benefit of commerce in the East.

For canals and dams alone, for the benefits of commerce mainly, if not alone, the Government has made the following appropriations in the following-named States:

Alabama.—Grant of 5 per cent net proceeds of public lands after 1819; sale of same for canal on Tennessee River, \$10,000.

Florida.—For the Peninsula Canal, \$50,000.

Illinois.—Lake Michigan and Mississippi River Canal, \$200,000; Hennepin Canal, \$50,000.

Indiana.—Wabash River Dam and Canal, \$65,000; Lake Erie and Wabash River Canal, \$15,000; Ohio vs. land grant of 2½ sections on each side of all canals.

Iowa.—Canal from Red River to Mississippi, \$1,500; Des Moines Rapids Canal, \$33,750; Sault Ste. Marie Canal, \$65,000.

Kentucky.—Louisville and Portland Canal, purchase of 1,000 shares of stock of the private corporation organized to build it. Value, \$100,000. Subsequent purchase and maintenance of the same, \$325,000.

Ohio.—Ohio River Falls Canal, \$90,000; Cumberland River Canal, \$10,000; Rough River Canal, \$25,000; Zanesville and Taylorville Canal, \$102,000.

Louisiana.—New Orleans Outlet Canal and Clarenton Canal, \$150,000.

Mississippi.—Carondelet Canal, \$25,000; canal from Mississippi to Gulf of Mexico, \$75,000; also 6 per cent net proceeds of all public-land sales for canal purposes.

Michigan.—Grant of 300,000 acres of land to build canal between Lake Superior and Lac La Belle; St. Clair Canal, \$1,096,250; Secretary of War authorized to draw for annual expenses for maintaining the canal; St. Mary's Canal, \$850,000; Secretary of War authorized to draw for annual expenses in maintaining the canal.

New Jersey.—Ship canal across Bergen Neck, \$150,000.

Oregon.—Cascade Canal, \$1,728,000.

Pennsylvania.—Surveys for ship canal from Allegheny to the sea, \$200,000; purchase of Monongahela Canal and improvements of the same, \$358,733.

South Carolina.—Purchase of 800 shares of Dismal Swamp Canal Company's stock; Santee Canal, \$39,000.

Tennessee.—Tennessee River Canal, \$250,000.

Texas.—Galveston and Brazos River Canal, \$25,000.

Virginia.—Purchase of 750 shares of Chesapeake Canal Stock Company's stock; purchase of 10,000 shares of Chesapeake and Ohio Company's stock; Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, \$20,000; survey canal Chesapeake Bay to Charleston, \$10,000.

Washington.—Survey canal Lake Union to Puget Sound, \$10,000.

Survey canal Bakers Bay and Shoalwater Bay, \$10,500.

Wisconsin.—Fox River and Wisconsin River Canal, 1½ sections of land on each side of Fox River, \$25,000; Milwaukee and Rock River Canal, 5 per cent of net proceeds of public lands sales, \$146,000; Wisconsin River Canal, \$10,000; Green Bay and Lake Michigan Canal, grant of 200,000 acres. Purchase of portage of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior Canal, \$350,000; improving same, \$20,000.

To this much we refer to show what the Government has done for the benefit of inland commerce in the sections of country before named, and that the Government has wisely done it as a national work we are here to assert. But while we do, we further assert that, as a work of the General Government, between the construction of a reservoir for the encouragement of inland commerce and the construction of one for agriculture, there is practically no difference; and if there is, then the argument is in favor of the latter.

To ask for this reclamation of the arid lands of the West by the General Government for the benefit of agriculture in this great western country is only to ask that fair play and even-handed justice be done between the different sections of this great country. It is but an appeal to the magnanimity of the General Government.

From May, 1875, to June 30, 1896, the Government received from sale of public lands, chiefly from the West, \$336,533, 129.20, which was expended in Eastern improvements. Scarcely a dollar was ever returned for any Eastern improvement or benefit.

This great Government can not afford to stain its great name with partiality so great as to refuse to add its aid to that great section in the West for the benefit of agriculture when it has done so much for commercial classes and commercial sections in other parts of the country. Indeed, my people do not expect it. They believe that this great country, whose bosom but a short time ago was trodden by the hoof of war, that passed from under it and through the greatest war known to civilization, and did it successfully, and did it without the confiscation of a single estate or the execution of a single political offender, can never be so unfair. So do I. I appeal for the speedy report and adoption of this amendment.