

# **Bureaucratic Opposition as a Factor in Truman's Failure to Achieve a Columbia Valley Authority**

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*Bureaucratic Opposition as a Factor in  
Truman's Failure to Achieve a  
Columbia Valley Authority*

Although the Truman Administration during the years 1949 to 1952 publicly espoused liberal electric power goals, it did not, on balance, compile an impressive record of achievement in this area.<sup>1</sup> Federal generating capacity, production of electric power and miles of transmission lines were increased considerably during this period;<sup>2</sup> however, in a number of efforts, the Government failed to achieve its goals or had to compromise with private power interests. For example, it was unable to win Congressional approval for steam plants for the Pacific Northwest and the Central Valley of California and to reserve the remaining choice power sites for Federal development. Furthermore, private power and its advocates managed to impede a number of Federally planned transmission systems and to force the Government to conclude "wheeling contracts," which allowed private utilities to purchase Federally produced power and distribute it over their own lines. In addition, the Administration did not succeed in establishing any new valley authorities as a means of solving the river basin organizational problem.<sup>3</sup>

An important contributing factor in many of these failures was opposition to specific programs from within the executive branch itself or from regulatory agencies of the Government. As an illustration, this paper will focus on one case where a concerted effort was made by Administration officials to achieve an important aim of liberals in the area of public power — the attempt to apply the Tennessee Valley Authority example to the Columbia River Valley.

How valley authorities came to be included on the liberal agenda is a story about which much could be and has been written.<sup>4</sup> Here, by way of introduction to this specific topic, it will suffice to discuss briefly American liberalism in general and then the liberal attitude toward natural resources and valley authorities in particular.

Mid-century American liberals were those individuals whose predecessors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had rejected both the old *laissez faire* capitalism, which emphasized individual freedom

and equality of opportunity, on the one hand, as well as compulsory centralized planning and nationalization of industries, on the other. Instead, these reformers chose a center path within the capitalist system. From the farmer-dominated Greenbackers, Grangers and Populists of the late nineteenth century to the broadened group called Progressives, which included laborers, farmers, middle class professionals and intellectuals, of the early twentieth century, down to the New Deal liberals of the thirties, such reform called for government power acting positively to promote the general welfare of the people. Thus would the old liberal ends of individual liberty and equality of opportunity be realized.<sup>5</sup>

Far from monolithic regarding the amount and methods of using this governmental power, twentieth century liberalism paradoxically included those who took a corporate or bureaucratic approach to reform as well as those who followed a humanitarian approach. The former would provide a secure society for the people through efficient management of business and government, while the latter would seek ways of restoring democracy and protecting individual rights.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, three methods of effecting corporate reform emerged as a means of achieving a more equitable system. One would break up trusts and by legislation force business back to a more competitive position; a second would rely on government regulation to control corporations so that underprivileged sectors of society would be protected; a third called for business self-regulation by allowing trade associations, rationalization of business in the interest of efficiency, upgrading of ethics and solving social problems.<sup>7</sup>

Building on its progressive base, liberalism during the New Deal developed the idea of a social welfare state with the Government supplying a social security system, promoting education and acting as a broker between such functional groups in society as business, agriculture and labor. Following some shifts in emphasis, the liberal program in 1941 still reflected its paradoxical heritage. It included a concern for small farmers and laborers, a program to redistribute wealth through taxation, compensatory government spending, some government planning, token restoration of competition, a social security system and the idea of counter-organization.<sup>8</sup>

During World War II, the New Deal had to take a back seat to the war effort.<sup>9</sup> But in the latter years of the conflict, liberals began to plan for resumption of the domestic reform program of the Roosevelt years once peace was restored. During this period, the group of liberals, influenced by Alvin Hansen, which advocated the latter New Deal methods of limited intervention of government and Keynesian emphasis on fiscal and monetary policy, gained ascendancy over the Thorstein Veblen inspired and smaller

group, which preferred direct and detailed governmental, social and economic planning.<sup>10</sup> An important liberal leader, Hansen, who was a Harvard economist, publicist and consultant to the Federal Reserve Board and the National Resources Planning Board, advocated using such methods that would preserve capitalism, strengthen the country and enrich the lives of the people. Examples included low-cost housing, urban renewal, a Federal highway system, public health facilities, sufficient old-age benefits, flood control and electric power programs.<sup>11</sup>

At mid-century, liberal philosophy regarding the natural resources of the country called for insuring that they be developed for the greatest good of the greatest number. Thus, they would have to be protected against monopolization by special interests for private gain. In an economic program of American liberals, published in 1948 and entitled *Saving American Capitalism*, the administrator of the Rural Electrification Association, Morris Llewellyn Cooke, stated that a country's resources are "a matter of general public rather than restricted private concern," and he stressed the importance of placing the improvement of the social and economic lives of the people above the money or market value of a project.<sup>12</sup>

On the specific matter of electric power, liberals believed that since the amount of electric energy available was directly related to the support of a larger population with a high standard of living, as the Tennessee Valley Authority had demonstrated, low cost Federal power should be made available to the many. This would require additional, direct governmental involvement in the generation and sale of electrical energy because of the tremendous size and scope of some multiple purpose river development and an expected shortage of power as home and industrial use increased.<sup>13</sup>

In 1948, a leading public power liberal, Carlton L. Nau, Executive Director of the American Public Power Association, spelled out some of the specifics for a public power program:

1. A continuation of multi-purpose river valley development, designed to produce as much electric power as feasible. But the important thing is to market the power in such a way that it lifts the total economy of a region, promotes higher standards of living, and encourages greater industrial development. This includes the right to build transmission lines to power markets . . .
2. Completion of the job of rural electrification.
3. Positive action to assure the establishment of a favorable body of law within which public power can serve.

4. Insistence upon better regulation of private companies but dependence upon competition, through yardstick plants and otherwise, for protection of the public interest.<sup>14</sup>

Private power had altered its response to the liberal program since the days prior to the New Deal when it had enjoyed great monopoly strength. It continued to attack the public power program, especially the valley authority idea, with the rhetoric of socialism and super-government, a strategy that put many Administration officials on the defensive once the McCarthy accusations of Communism in government got underway in 1950. However, private power advocates no longer argued that government should not build the very large dams or that it was impossible to have flood control and hydro-electric power in the same project. They did maintain that private industry should be allowed to develop individual water power sites when capital was available and the job not too big and, secondly, that government should not be involved in the business aspects of the electric power field. Most private power companies now admitted defeat on the argument that power should be sold at the dams as falling water, which would have eliminated government from both generation and transmission of hydro-electric power. Hence, they concentrated during this period on trying to gain control of transmission of Federally-produced power, contending that this aspect definitely fell into the category of a business operation that private industry could easily perform.<sup>15</sup>

## I

When Harry S. Truman was inaugurated in January 1949, the future looked bright for liberalism generally and for public power in particular. This had not always been the case throughout his first Administration, which began in April 1945, when he succeeded to the Presidency upon the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt. During his first two years, Truman committed himself to the domestic program of his predecessor and called for a long list of reform measures, including a permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee, full employment legislation, a broadened social security program and a Federal health scheme. However, due to a split in his own party, an inherited anti-New Deal coalition in Congress, a polarization of liberalism and, after 1946, a Congressional Republican majority, the President failed to act decisively to further his own program.<sup>16</sup>

Having abandoned any hope for Congressional action on his proposals, Truman concentrated during the last half of 1947 and in 1948 on creating a liberal record for the fall election fight. Some critics suggested that the liberal, large-scale program for social and economic reform that he put before

Congress was intended merely to gain votes.<sup>17</sup> However, his campaign for the Presidency convinced most liberals of his sincerity. In it, he endorsed the liberal power policies of Franklin Roosevelt and accused Republicans of trying to reverse New Deal gains in reclamation and power.<sup>18</sup> Apparently winning by denouncing the Republican controlled Eighty-first Congress and by equating that body with Republicanism, Truman helped to bring about a Democratic majority.<sup>19</sup> This change augured well for public power liberalism since Democrats had a better record on the issue than did Republicans.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, once elected, Truman intended to follow up on his campaign promises. Four days after his victory he told his cabinet that he expected their cooperation in making these assurances a reality. A further indication of the President's determination to support a liberal power program was his promise in his 1949 State of the Union Message of a "fair deal from the Government" to each citizen and segment of society and his inclusion among a number of liberal goals one of "resource development and public power."<sup>21</sup> In May, Truman sent word to the American Public Power Association that the Federal government must do its part in developing the power resources of the country, which he termed "vital to the happiness, the welfare and the security of our people."<sup>22</sup>

Despite these promising beginnings, Truman often failed to make straightforward and concerted attempts to achieve immediate public power goals during his full term from 1949 to 1952. Part of the explanation can be found in his understanding of what was possible in Congress where he never had a real working majority for power liberalism, the split in his own party and his desire to avoid political issues in the interests of Democratic success in the next election.<sup>23</sup> In the few instances when the President and his Secretaries of the Interior did make positive attempts to achieve liberal power goals, as in the effort to establish a Columbia Valley Administration, they usually failed, often largely because of executive branch in-fighting.

## II

Since the conservation movement of the progressive period, reformers had been urging that river valleys be developed in a comprehensive and integrated way for the achievement of maximum protection, preservation and use of all of their resources and in such a way as to benefit all the people to whom these resources belonged. The Tennessee Valley Authority experiment had proved a successful method of achieving such goals; therefore, many liberals hoped that similar organizational structures could be applied to the other major river valleys in the nation. A minority of liberals also saw valley authorities as a means of counterbalancing the increasing trend toward

consolidation by private companies and as a step toward an organized economy directed mainly by the government.<sup>24</sup> President Roosevelt had recommended in 1933 that other units similar to the Tennessee Valley Authority be developed, and in early 1937 and again in October 1944 he called for regional authorities for seven other river valleys in the country.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, in 1945, most liberals considered the extension of the Tennessee Valley Authority idea to be an unfulfilled promise of the New Deal.<sup>26</sup>

Disagreement came on the organizational structure of the proposed authorities. The old progressive Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior under F.D.R. and for about a year under Truman, favored placing a single administrator at the head of each authority but with all heads and their agencies placed under the central administration of the Interior Department. Others, such as T.V.A. chairman David Lilienthal, believed the authorities should be run by three-man boards situated in the region and reporting directly to the President.<sup>27</sup>

During his first Administration, Truman had appeared to favor the idea of regional authorities. In speeches to various groups, letters released to the press and messages to Congress, he supported in general such organizational structures for the Missouri and Columbia Valleys and reaffirmed his approval of the Tennessee Valley Authority.<sup>28</sup>

In Congress, Senator James Murray (Democrat, Montana) continued his practice, begun in 1944, of introducing bills to create a Missouri Valley Authority. Senator Hugh Mitchell (Democrat, Washington) introduced a bill authorizing a Columbia Valley Authority in 1945, and Murray introduced a similar one in 1947. None, however, made any headway in Congress.<sup>29</sup>

After having carried ten out of eleven Western states, where he had made resources policy a major issue in his 1948 campaign, Truman felt he had a mandate to carry out Federal river valley development in the West. Although he had not specifically advocated additional T.V.A.'s during the campaign, Truman did say in Seattle, "I have urged time and time again that the TVA experience shows the way in which we should move in other great river basins."<sup>30</sup> In his January 5 State of the Union Message, he reiterated this position.<sup>31</sup>

Although the President wrote privately that he was interested in the Missouri River, the Red River and the Central Valley of California, as well as in the Columbia River, it was the Columbia that most interested him and his advisors. An authority here, they felt, stood the best chance of winning acceptance. Therefore, shortly after his inauguration, Truman directed his

Secretaries of Interior, Agriculture and Commerce; the Acting Director of the Bureau of the Budget and the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors to prepare a bill that would create an organization for the Columbia Valley. Presidential administrative assistant, Charles S. Murphy, was named to coordinate the work, while Secretary of the Interior, Julius A. Krug, was given the responsibility of presenting the legislative proposals to Congress.<sup>32</sup>

With the announcement of these activities, public and private power advocates squared off for battle. The private utility industry readied itself for what it termed an "imposition of an ideological threat unequaled since the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority."<sup>33</sup> Purcell L. Smith, president of the National Association of Electrical Companies, called the plan an effort to create a "superstate," and Colonel H.S. Bennion, managing director, Edison Electric Institute, warned that a Columbia Valley Authority would jeopardize water rights that belonged to the people of the West under their state laws.<sup>34</sup>

In the Northwest, private utilities and other business spokesmen through Chambers of Commerce and the Pacific Northwest Development Association quickly publicized their opposition to such a plan. The general belief among these groups was that the inter-agency set-up was sufficient for administrative purposes.<sup>35</sup> This arrangement had evolved on a Federal level in 1943 when the Federal Inter-Agency River Basin Committee was established to try to fill organizational vacuums. Representatives of Federal agencies and departments concerned with water resource development — the Departments of Interior and of Agriculture, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of the Budget and the Federal Power Commission — met monthly to exchange information and coordinate their river basin planning activities and operations.<sup>36</sup> Regional sub-committees were subsequently formed, including the Missouri Basin Inter-Agency Committee in 1945 and the Columbia Basin Inter-Agency Committee in 1946. Membership on the latter included a representative from the Departments of Interior, Commerce and Agriculture; Army Corps of Engineers; Federal Power Commission and the Bonneville Power Administration. Governors of the seven states lying wholly or in part in the Columbia Basin, or their representatives, could attend the meetings. These committees had advisory and information-sharing powers only; they could decide no important policy matters. Those who favored keeping this arrangement rather than instituting a Columbia Valley Authority argued that all that was required additionally for development of the river valley was a long-range plan adopted by Congress with funds set aside for each phase of the plan to be completed on schedule.<sup>37</sup>

Considerable opposition to the plan came from quarters other than the business sector in the Pacific Northwest, as well. The governors of Oregon,



Idaho, Wyoming and Washington all sent messages to the President disapproving of a Columbia Valley Authority on the grounds that the states did not wish to relinquish their autonomy and their natural resources. Republicans generally opposed such an organizational structure as did the Farm Bureau Federation, a large portion of the press and reclamation groups in the area.<sup>38</sup>

Furthermore, reports from the Northwest to the White House indicated that many people in the area who wanted some kind of coordinating agency did not want one modeled on the Tennessee Valley Authority, an autonomous body with broad powers dealing with control, conservation and development of water resources and responsible only to the President and Congress. Partly because the Army Corps of Engineers had just completed a comprehensive report on a plan for the development of the Columbia Valley and because of a feeling that this might be sufficient, many Granges, public utility districts and private citizens feared loss of control to a T.V.A. type corporation. Even a majority of Federal officials in the field, although aware that they would have to follow the views of their superiors in Washington, seemed to favor a compromise. A number of them advocated authoritative coordination of activities then being conducted by Federal agencies either through the Bonneville Power Administration or the Executive Office of the President.<sup>39</sup>

Truman and his aides, however, were not discouraged by this opposition. The President wrote to a friend:

Naturally I would pay no attention to statements made by the Republican governors of Washington and Oregon. I think the people in those two states are entitled to the development of the great River Valley and I am going to try to get it done.<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore, Truman was heartened by the expressions of approval sent him by labor organizations in the area, farmers' unions, Granges, the Washington State House of Representatives and fifteen Oregon state legislators.<sup>41</sup> Assistant Secretary of the Interior C. Girard Davidson, a former employee of the Bonneville Power Administration and a zealous supporter of a Columbia Valley Authority, who had been assigned by Krug to work with Murphy, was even pleased with the situation:

The fight is shaping up in an excellent manner. So far the Republicans and private utilities are against it and the Democrats, labor and farmers are for it. What more could we ask?<sup>42</sup>

Neither did the opposition that became apparent in the committee appointed to draft the bill deter Truman in his determination to present a

Tennessee Valley Authority type bill to Congress. Several of the agencies and departments represented on the committee disagreed on certain aspects of the proposal, mainly on "how the Columbia Valley Authority should be related to the 'functional' agencies of Government" and whether operational powers should be vested in the body.<sup>43</sup> The Department of Agriculture, for example, recommended that the organization be given only coordinating and supervisory responsibilities rather than operational authority. Since the Department of Agriculture had itself often insisted that land resources must be considered as an integral part of comprehensive river valley planning, it feared that its property and land functions would be transferred to a Columbia Valley Authority.<sup>44</sup> The Department of Commerce, which was interested chiefly in the production of cheap and abundant power in order to enhance economic development of the Northwest, wanted such a body to have power to plan and build dams, control the flow of water through them and conduct a strong power distribution program, but it opposed giving the authority powers so broad that it would create serious problems with regard to functional reorganization of the Federal government.<sup>45</sup>

However, the two agencies that provided the most serious opposition to the President's plan and that played the key role in the bureaucratic maneuvering that contributed to its defeat were the Corps of Engineers in the Department of the Army and the Bureau of Reclamation in the Department of the Interior. Often in conflict with each other, these two agencies were united in their opposition to the establishment of an organization similar to the T.V.A. in the Columbia Valley.

The Army Corps of Engineers, in its civil functions (which were entirely separate from its military functions), carried primary responsibility for the design, building and operation of flood control and navigation improvement projects on rivers and other waterways. Since these were its primary concerns, the Engineers had little interest in multiple-resource development and optimum power development, even though since 1936 they had the authority to build multi-purpose projects and since 1938 to build power facilities. Furthermore, the Corps tended to view each project almost entirely from the point of view of the benefits that would accrue to a certain local area represented by a Congressman who was backing the particular development.<sup>46</sup>

The Engineers had this attitude toward resource development partly because of their special relationship with members of Congress and partly because of the manner in which their projects were approved. Although in theory responsible to the President as a part of the executive branch, the Corps for many years had been able largely to evade Presidential authority and instead maintained a responsibility to Congress, particularly to certain individual members and committees.<sup>47</sup>

The Engineers and the Public Works Committees of both Houses of the Congress held an interlocking relationship since it was to these committees that legislators, responding to pressure from their home districts for a certain project, went to get a survey authorized and that the Chief of Engineers sent his report on the proposed work. The committee approached, in turn, did not act on any project that did not receive a favorable report from the Chief. Because the Corps' projects were good vote getters, many Congressmen, including a number of those on the key committees concerned with public power, supported the Corps and its single-purpose, pork-barrel projects as opposed to liberal power proposals such as the consolidation of public power functions in one Government agency and multiple-purpose resource development. Furthermore, members of such key committees as the Public Works and Appropriations Committees served as officers in the National Rivers and Harbors Congress, an organization that opposed most of the liberal public power program, including valley authorities and executive reorganization of governmental power functions.<sup>48</sup>

The Bureau of Reclamation was the other agency concerned with the planning and building of water resource development projects. Its primary interest was irrigation since it was charged with the task of administering Federal reclamation laws in the seventeen states west of the one-hundredth meridian. However, the Bureau's program included not just single-purpose projects but also complete multiple-purpose projects and dual power and irrigation projects that obtained their water supply from reservoirs built by the Corps of Engineers.<sup>49</sup> The Bureau also marketed the power produced at its own projects, as well as that from those built by the Corps of Engineers, with the exception of the power produced in the area of the Bonneville Power Administration, a marketing agency that had been created in 1940 to dispose of power generated at the Bonneville project on the Columbia River.

Like the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau was jealous of its own powers and therefore opposed any system of river basin organization that would eliminate its functions and properties. However, its philosophy of river basin development and public power coincided with that of liberals more often than did that of the Engineers. It was, for example, genuinely interested in and involved with comprehensive river basin development.<sup>50</sup>

The Bureau did not enjoy the close relationship with committees and members of Congress that the Engineers did, partly because of the differing procedures for authorization of projects. Unlike the Corps, the Bureau of Reclamation planned and initiated its own projects and asked the Secretary of the Interior for approval. The report eventually went to the President through the Bureau of the Budget and then to the House of Representatives, where it was referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.<sup>51</sup>

When the matter of the authority for the Columbia Valley was being considered by the executive branch in early 1949, both the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation informed the President that they opposed the establishment of a T.V.A. type authority in the Columbia Valley. Their opposition was understandable since such an organization would mean the transference to the new authority of their agencies' responsibilities for the building and operating of dams, irrigation works and power facilities.<sup>52</sup>

For nearly a decade, both agencies had been quietly working to forestall the establishment of additional valley authorities in the country. In 1941, after he had helped draft bills to create regional authorities in the Southwest and in the Columbia Valley and had seen these measures die in committee, David Lilienthal wrote:

It has been impossible to get a bill through Congress . . . because the Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Engineers have more political influence than the people themselves are able to express.<sup>53</sup>

In 1945, the liberal *Nation* charged that the two agencies had made a "clandestine alliance" to oppose the creation of river valley authorities. Referring to this statement, Bonneville Power Administrator, Paul Raver, complained the following year that although Bureau officials were careful not to contradict departmental policy in public, they never endorsed the idea of valley authorities either.<sup>54</sup>

Bureau Commissioner Michael Straus had been an early supporter of the inter-agency committee approach to river basin organizational problems as a means of avoiding valley authorities. In 1946, he praised the committee plan to state engineers in Wyoming and warned that if the system failed, there would be an increased demand for valley authorities. This, he said, would be a "punishment that fits our crime."<sup>55</sup>

Corps of Engineers' officials also had a long record of working to defeat an authority in the Columbia Valley. In 1946, when the Corps was considering postponement of the target date of October 1948 for its Columbia "308" (comprehensive) review,<sup>56</sup> the Assistant Chief of Engineers cautioned the Division Engineer in the region, Colonel Theron D. Weaver, to take into consideration the "possibility that an Engineers Department report containing an up-to-date comprehensive plan" might be necessary "to keep the Department in a sound position with respect to proposals for a Columbia Valley Authority."<sup>57</sup>

In December 1947 Weaver wrote the Chief of Engineers that "positive measures" must be taken to combat a Columbia Valley Authority and

suggested as one means the strengthening of the Columbia Basin Inter-Agency Committee by making the governors full members. The Chief agreed that action was needed and that one step would be to invigorate the committee; however, he did not approve Weaver's plan for fear that the governors might gain too much power as full members. But he did urge Weaver to do all possible to make the governors aware "of the 'Authority' threat" so as to win their support of the committee.<sup>58</sup>

During the drafting of the Administration proposal for a Columbia Valley organizational structure in February and March 1949, the Army recommended that instead of creating an authority, the Columbia Basin Inter-Agency Committee be granted power "to formulate programs and submit recommendations to the President and to Congress."<sup>59</sup> Smarting because his agency was not "asked to participate in the drafting," the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation objected that the suggested proposal appeared to require that the Bureau abdicate its "responsibility for the nation's water-resources conservation and use program in the West," a step that he certainly would not recommend. Straus suggested that the Columbia Valley Administration be made a part of the Department of the Interior and that the Corps of Engineers be required to use the services of the Bureau in investigation, construction, operation and maintenance of projects.<sup>60</sup>

Congressman Hugh B. Mitchell (Democrat, Washington), who had introduced the original Columbia Valley Authority bill a few years earlier when he was in the Senate, realized the extent and possible danger of the opposition from various executive branch agencies. In a letter to the President he charged that the Bonneville Power Administration, the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation were the real foes of the plan for a Columbia Valley Administration and that they were killing chances for it because they feared such an organization would replace them in the region.<sup>61</sup>

Despite such opposition to an authority similar to the T.V.A. and to the one proposed in the original Mitchell bill, the Administration plan did not in substance differ a great deal from those models. The Columbia Valley Administration would be set up as a government corporation with a general manager, appointed by the directors and responsible for operations. Employees would have to be hired on a merit basis without regard for their political affiliations. The head office would be located in the region and two of the three directors required to be residents of that region. The powers of the administrative body would include construction and operation of projects with the view toward improving navigation; preventing and controlling floods; producing, transmitting and selling electric power at wholesale rates;

conserving and reclaiming lands, wildlife, fish and mineral resources and making payments instead of taxes to state and local governments.<sup>62</sup>

However, the Administration was anxious to avoid the criticism of "super-government" and loss of local control that had been leveled at the Mitchell bill. Emphasis was placed, therefore, on the argument that no new powers would be given the Federal government; rather, powers which it already had would merely be relocated in the Columbia Valley area, thus providing more rather than less grass roots control. The substitution of the word "Administration" for "Authority" in the title of the proposal undoubtedly was meant to reflect this idea.

President Truman was careful to stress this aspect of local control in his request to Congress on April 13, 1949 for the establishment of a Columbia Valley Administration. In his statement, Truman noted that the coordination of activities of the Federal agencies that had long participated in the resource development of the Northwest had presented "a difficult organizational problem" and asked for legislation that would allow the Federal government to deal more effectively with the task of development and conservation of the resources of the area. He further requested the Congress to be guided by two principal objectives: (1) that there should be "unified treatment of the related resources within each natural area of the country" and (2) that there should be the "greatest decentralization of Federal powers and the greatest possible local participation in their exercise."<sup>63</sup>

Four separate Columbia Valley Administration bills were subsequently introduced into Congress: H.R. 4286 and H.R. 4287 in the House and S. 1631 and S. 1645 in the Senate. On introducing S. 1645, Senator Warren G. Magnuson (Democrat, Washington) explained that the measure provided for an administration "somewhat similar to what has been set up for the development of the Tennessee Valley."<sup>64</sup> But, he noted, it differed from the Authority there in two ways. First, a new agency with new powers would not be established; rather, existing Federal powers would be reorganized to function more efficiently. Secondly, the powers of the Administration would not be as all-inclusive as those of the T.V.A. since only some of the Federal establishments in the regions would be included in the reorganization. The Senator also told his colleagues that the proposed Administration would take over all projects and properties of the Bonneville Power Administration, the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation in the basin and would be responsible for preparing unified plans and programs which it would then recommend to the President for his budget. These proposals would then be sent to Congress for approval.<sup>65</sup> The four bills differed from the executive branch final draft in only one respect: while the President's measure provided

for Civil Service coverage, these bills exempted personnel from it but provided for similar protection.<sup>66</sup>

Among other measures introduced that pertained to a Columbia Valley Authority, one by Senator Harry P. Cain (Republican, Washington), a long-time foe of such a body, was regarded as a threat to the Administration's proposal. Cain's bill (S. 1595) would have effectuated the so-called Newell-Weaver scheme. This plan, which was an agreement between the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation on "Columbia River Basin Principles and Responsibilities for the Comprehensive Plan of Development," had been sent to the President on April 11, 1949 — just two days before Truman transmitted his message to Congress recommending a Columbia Valley Administration.<sup>67</sup>

With this agreement, the two erstwhile antagonists had joined forces in the face of a common threat, consummating what some observers called a "shotgun marriage." The two agencies had been working on their own separate reports for Columbia Basin development for some time, and the Corps had twice refused to cooperate with the Bureau on the matter.<sup>68</sup> However, when plans for Truman's proposal to Congress began to unfold, the two agencies agreed in December, 1948 to correlate their respective plans for development of the basin. Assistant Secretary of the Interior Davidson first heard of the agreement through the newspapers and reprimanded Straus for the leak and for allowing the implication to be drawn that the Department of the Interior had already approved the joint plan. Warning the Commissioner to refrain from publicizing the Newell-Weaver plan until the Interior Department could study it, he directed Straus to remind his employees of "the departmental policy in support of a Columbia Valley Authority."<sup>69</sup>

Straus defended his actions by assuring his superiors that the agreement concerned no operations or policy but only technical and minor differences. He wrote Secretary Krug that he had feared that one day he would be placed in just such a dilemma regarding support of a Columbia Valley Authority, but reminded him that the Secretary had earlier reassured him by laying down "clear policy that . . . the Bureau of Reclamation . . . would not be expected either to oppose or support Authority legislation."<sup>70</sup>

The reply came from Davidson. Repeating his original instructions to the Commissioner, the Assistant Secretary added curtly that he knew "of no statement of the Secretary's or anyone else" that exempted Straus from taking such orders.<sup>71</sup>

President Truman perceived that the timing of the presentation of the Newell-Weaver report was crucial. If he were to approve this plan now and Congress were to put it into effect, one of the main arguments in favor of a Columbia Valley Administration would be demolished in the minds of many — the existence of a conflict between the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation over how and by whom the Columbia Valley should be developed. In light of this threat to his plan, the President apparently decided that he must delay presentation of the combined report to Congress until his proposal could be acted upon. On April 12 he informed Secretary Krug that since the Newell-Weaver report was a matter that in several ways bore upon his Columbia Valley proposal, he believed that “nothing should be done with the Agreement for the time being,” but rather should be delayed until he had a chance to study it further.<sup>72</sup> By April 18, Truman had made his decision. He wrote Krug and the Secretary of the Army, Kenneth C. Royall, that he viewed their report as “merely an interim step in the preparation of reports” that were to be submitted to him at a later date; therefore, he felt that it was unnecessary to approve the agreement at the present time.<sup>73</sup>

On May 27, hearings opened before the Committees on Public Works of both Houses on the bills to establish a Columbia Valley Administration. At these hearings and elsewhere, Secretary of the Interior Krug and his Assistant Secretary, C. Girard Davidson, worked diligently on behalf of the executive branch proposal. Krug, for example, told a press conference on March 12 that he favored it very much and in a speech to the American Public Power Association on May 12, he called the Columbia Valley Administration proposal “the most important public power move of the decade.”<sup>74</sup> Krug led off the argument in favor of the plan before the Senate committee, and Davidson testified on its behalf for several days before both committees.<sup>75</sup>

However, the Office of the Secretary of the Interior was the only part of the executive branch that enthusiastically backed the plan. The Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation were the most definite and effective in their opposition, even though it had to be largely surreptitious. However, lack of support from other agencies and departments also had a negative effect. For example, the Secretaries of Commerce and of the Army showed restraint in endorsing the bill when testifying before the Congressional committees as asked to do by the Interior Department. Under sharp and persistent questioning by Representative Homer Angell (Republican, Oregon), Secretary Gray left the impression that he supported the Administration’s bill because as a member of the team, he was expected to do so.<sup>76</sup> When asked by the two committee chairmen to state their opinions in writing, these two department heads were even less positive. The Secretary of Commerce wrote the Senate committee chairman merely that he favored the



bill. In a letter to the House committee counterpart, he listed some of the good points of the proposal but gave no definite recommendation. In his statement, the Secretary of the Army made no positive recommendation that the legislation be passed.<sup>77</sup>

Other executive branch employees actually worked at cross purposes to the President's stated policy. Included were representatives of Federal agencies on the Columbia Basin Inter-Agency Committee and its parent organization, the Federal Inter-Agency River Basin Committee. The latter body was asked by Assistant Secretary Davidson's office to prepare a statement regarding its background and accomplishments for use by the Congressional committees considering the Columbia Valley Administration bills. The resulting report was a biased view of the Inter-Agency Committee role in river basin development. Since it credited the committees with a coordinating function and with success as arbiters of jurisdictional conflicts that they did not deserve, executive branch supporters of the Columbia Valley Administration proposal feared that the report would hurt the plan's chances for success in Congress because opponents could use the document as evidence that the inter-agency committees could solve any coordination problems. For this reason, the Interior Department did not transmit the statement to Congress. As a result, no unbiased description of the Inter-Agency Committees' failures as well as their successes from these bodies themselves was made available to the legislators who were studying the advantages and disadvantages of the Columbia Valley Administration as compared with the inter-agency approach.<sup>78</sup> Thus many opponents of the President's proposal for the Columbia continued to argue with considerable success, as foes of valley authorities elsewhere had, that the inter-agency committee already established in the area could solve organizational problems.<sup>79</sup>

However, it was the joint plan of the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation that constituted the most effective weapon against the proposal for a Columbia Valley Administration. One indication that the executive branch considered this to be the case was that Interior Secretary Krug and Assistant Secretary Davidson felt compelled to state repeatedly in their testimonies before Congress that this combined report was no substitute for an administrative mechanism. Krug argued that the Administration was needed in the Columbia Valley to integrate the "planning, budgeting, and operation" of the many Federal agencies involved in the development of land and water resources in the Pacific Northwest, for a coordinated budget for these activities to be presented to Congress and for decentralization of authority in dealing with these programs.<sup>80</sup> Davidson admitted that the Newell-Weaver plan was essential for development of the river basin, but he

emphasized that it provided neither a "single, unified comprehensive balanced development program for all of the resources of the region" nor a method for "relating the resources of all the agencies concerned." The proposed Columbia Valley Administration would, he maintained, correct these deficiencies.<sup>81</sup>

When the Congressional hearings opened, the Senate Committee on Public Works had before it, in addition to the bills dealing with the Columbia Valley Administration, a measure intended to authorize the Newell-Weaver plan. By July 1, five such bills had been introduced into Congress. However, they could not be acted upon because the legislators still had not received the reports from the executive branch. The reason the President gave publicly for the delay was that they had not yet been fully studied.<sup>82</sup> The fact was, however, that the White House was stalling. In late June, David Bell, an administrative assistant in the Office of the President, wrote his superior, Special Counsel Charles S. Murphy, that the Budget Bureau, which was about to receive the reports, should be allowed to "go slowly and submit the reports next session" since "those in Congress who are unfriendly to the bill will try to force these reports out of the executive branch."<sup>83</sup>

With the joint report bottled up, efforts were made to tack it on to the Omnibus Rivers, Harbors and Flood Control Bill. When this failed, friends of the Corps of Engineers in Congress tried to get authorization for only the Corps-proposed projects in the Northwest. The Senate Public Works Committee added to the House approved appropriation of \$107,997,000 for Engineers' river development works another \$142,003,000. At the same time, it explained that it was still considering the Columbia Valley Administration bills.<sup>84</sup>

After the Senate approved the amendments recommended by the committee in October, the Interior Department and other Columbia Valley Administration hopefuls became fearful that, as a member of the Washington State Columbia Basin Commission put it, the Army Engineers were "so darned powerful they could shove her on through as is and leave the Interior's part of the plan stranded high and dry."<sup>85</sup> However, Senator Magnuson was able to get final action on this proposal delayed. The session ended soon thereafter, and with it went any real chance for a Columbia Valley Administration.

After the second session of the Eighty-First Congress opened and President Truman again asked Congress for a Columbia Valley Administration in his State of the Union Message, the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee began holding hearings on an amendment it wished

to propose to the Omnibus Bill. Its purpose was to include authorization for Interior reclamation projects in the measure. Meanwhile, the House Public Works Committee added more amendments authorizing even more Corps of Engineers projects.<sup>86</sup>

Although he instructed the new Secretary of the Interior, Oscar L. Chapman, through Budget Director Frank C. Pace, to resume efforts to get a Columbia Valley Administration measure through Congress, Truman realized by this time that he had been beaten. He apparently concluded that an act adopting the comprehensive plan of the two agencies for development of the Columbia Basin would be better than legislation with no coordination of operations and with Interior Department projects either slighted or omitted entirely. Therefore, he approved the joint report on February 2, 1950. The next day Chapman asked Vice-President Alben Barkley to try to obtain Senate approval of the reclamation projects, a task to which he assigned top priority, and only mentioned the Columbia Valley Administration as a desirable goal.<sup>87</sup>

However, the President lost on all counts. The Omnibus Rivers, Harbors and Flood Control Bill that came to him for his signature in May neither authorized the joint plan of the Departments of the Army and Interior nor any of the Bureau of Reclamation projects. Only those works in the plan that were to be built by the Corps of Engineers were included. In a special message on May 22, Truman excoriated Congress for this piecemeal approach to river basin development and for failing to authorize the Newell-Weaver plan which, although it constituted no substitute for a Columbia Valley Administration, would have been "clearly superior to the partial and inadequate authorizations contained in this act."<sup>88</sup>

Furthermore, hopes for an organizational structure modeled on the T.V.A. for the Northwest were nearly dead by this time. Henceforth, the Truman Administration paid only lip-service to the idea. On May 11, 1950, when dedicating the Grand Coulee Dam, the President reaffirmed his approval of the plan and its place in his Fair Deal. Secretary Chapman reassured Senator Glen Taylor of Idaho, who planned to run in favor of a Columbia Valley Administration in the 1950 elections, that it was still a "part of the President's program."<sup>89</sup> However, the plan rapidly lost all chance of approval. The *New York Times* in May reported that agitation for the proposal had greatly diminished, that it was no longer the subject of lively discussion in the Northwest and that even Secretary Chapman had remarked that he thought it would be defeated if voted on by the people in the area. The same newspaper saw Glen Taylor's defeat in his race for the Democratic Senate as a symbol of the failure of the one major effort by Truman and the Interior Department to establish a Valley Authority.<sup>90</sup>

Factors that contributed to this failure included the absence of a clear-cut support in the Pacific Northwest itself, active opposition from most of the governors in the same area,<sup>91</sup> the well-organized campaign by private utilities to discredit public power in general and unenthusiastic support by some Federal officials who testified before Congress. However, opposition from the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Corps of Engineers, especially their joint effort in presenting a combined development plan for the Columbia Valley at the crucial moment when the President's proposal was being put before Congress, constituted a key element in the failure of the Second Truman Administration to advance public power liberalism.

### III

There were other instances during these years when Federal agencies worked to undermine or defeat Administration liberal electric power programs. One of the chief antagonists was the Army Corps of Engineers. This agency used its connections with legislators in 1949 and 1950 to block enactment of a plan for reorganization of the executive branch of government that would have consolidated all water resource activities in one department; it offered no support to the Interior Department's struggle during the Truman years to save the country's remaining choice power sites for Federal, comprehensive river basin development; and in 1952 it helped prevent the inclusion of a general power policy statement from proposed legislation based on the report of the President's Water Resources Policy Commission.<sup>92</sup>

The Federal Power Commission also helped defeat a number of Interior Department liberal power aims, particularly with regard to saving choice power sites. The Commission was one of the so-called independent regulatory agencies of the Government, and by law no more than three of its five members could be of the same political party. However, Truman could appoint members when vacancies arose,<sup>93</sup> and, by his own reorganization plan, could now name the chairman. Despite this leverage, in two instances — the fight between public and private power over Kings River in the Central Valley of California and over Roanoke Rapids on the Roanoke River in Virginia and North Carolina — the Federal Power Commission took a stand in direct opposition to the Interior Department and ruled against Federal development by granting licenses to private power companies to develop the sites in question.<sup>94</sup>

Federal Power Commission members could usually be identified with the public or private power camp. Since appointments to this body had to be confirmed by the Senate, political pressures influenced its composition. For example, the reappointment in 1949 of the public power champion Leland

Olds was blocked in the Upper House by supporters of private power and natural gas interests. And Truman passed up a chance in 1950 to replace the Chairman with a Republican more sympathetic to public power, probably to keep the friendship of representatives of natural gas interests in the Senate.<sup>95</sup>

In their opposition to Administration programs, executive department agencies usually acted according to their own self-interest, rather than from an analysis of whether a certain step was liberal or whether it would promote the general welfare. This was especially true with regard to the Corps of Engineers, which cared a great deal about protecting its own civil functions and very little about public power liberalism.

With the Chief Executive unable or unwilling to bring such defectors into line, Federal agencies were thus able to frustrate a number of public power aims of the Truman Administration.

#### NOTES

1 For details, see Phyllis R. de Luna, "Public Versus Private Power During the Truman Administration: A Study of Fair Deal Liberalism" (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1974). Very little other work has been done on the subject of electric power policies of the Truman Presidency. Liberal historians have included public power policies as evidence of Truman Administration liberalism but without providing any in-depth analysis or discussion. Instead, they have relied mainly on an article by Richard Neustadt, "Congress and the Fair Deal: A Legislative Balance Sheet," in *The Shaping of Twentieth-Century America*, ed. by Richard M. Abrams and Lawrence W. Levine, (Boston, 1965), pp. 585-88, which merely included public power among several "New Deal landmarks in social welfare and economic development" that Truman managed to get "means for modernizing" from Congress. See *ibid.*, p. 575. The other work is John R. Waltrip, "Public Power During the Truman Administration" (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Missouri, 1965), which concluded that "the Truman era was the period of the most extensive development of Federal power in United States history" (p. 130). Robert Griffith, in a paper presented to the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians in Washington, D.C., on April 7, 1972, however, questioned these findings, stating that the "Administration's triumph was more apparent than real" (p. 27).

<sup>2</sup> See de Luna, pp. 548-50. Private generating capacity and production increased during this period, as well, so that Federal and private percentages of the total did not change very much. Federal production grew from 12.5% of the total to 13.2%, while private industry production remained at 80.7%. In capacity, Federal grew from 9.8% to 11.8%, while private slipped from 80.2% to 78.4% of the total. See *Electrical World*, January 25, 1954, p. 167, p. 177; Waltrip, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> See de Luna, Chapters III, IV, V, VI.

<sup>4</sup> See *Ibid.*, Chapter I for a detailed analysis of liberalism in America and Chapter II for "The Genesis of the Liberal Position on Electric Power."

<sup>5</sup> Alonzo B. Hamby, *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism*, (New York, 1973), pp. 513-15; Norman D. Markowitz, *The Rise and Fall of the People's Century: Henry A. Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948*, (New York, 1973), pp. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> See Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*, (New York, 1967), Chapters VI and VII; Markowitz, pp. 7-8.

<sup>7</sup> E.W. Hawley, *The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly, A Study in Economic Ambivalence*, (Princeton, N.J., 1966), pp. 6-9; Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era*, (New York, 1954), pp. 18-22, pp. 79-80, Chapter IX; Eric Goldman, *Rendezvous with Destiny*, (New York, 1952), pp. 162-68.

<sup>8</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Coming of the New Deal*, (Boston, 1958), pp. 38-39, pp. 92-93, pp. 128-29; Hawley, pp. 187-204; Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.*, (New York, 1955), pp. 314-16; Hawley, p. 192, p. 195, pp. 203-04. For discussions of the idea of counterorganization, see John K. Galbraith, *American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power*, (Boston, 1952); David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion*, (New York, 1955); Grant McConnell, *Private Power and American Democracy*, (New York, 1966); R. Alan Lawson, *The Failure of Independent Liberalism, 1930-1941*, (New York, 1971), pp. 19-36. The idea of balancing organized interest groups appealed to most progressive reformers, so that ultimately a pluralism of power blocs became the outstanding feature of American life.

<sup>9</sup> Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1943: The Tide Turns*, (New York, 1950), pp. 569-73.

<sup>10</sup> For a fuller discussion of these two approaches and their respective advocates, see Hamby, pp. 9-12.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>12</sup> Seymour F. Harris, ed., *Saving American Capitalism, A Liberal Economic Program*, (New York, 1948), p. 109.

<sup>13</sup> "The Power Policy Fight," undated, File 1-310, Administrative General, Power Development, General, Part 6, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Record Group 38, National Archives Building, Washington, D.C. Hereafter, Record Group is cited as R.G. and the National Archives Building as N.A.

<sup>14</sup> Harris, p. 129.

<sup>15</sup> "167 Electric Companies Announce Stand in Federal River Projects," *Edison Electric Institute Bulletin*, XIII, (August, 1945), p. 236; Waltrip, p. 28; "Chronological Highlights of Southwestern Power Administration's Development," undated, File 1-310, Administrative General, Power Development General, R.G. 48, N.A.; Edwin Vennard, *Government in the Power Business*, (New York, 1968), pp. 144-86; *New York Times*, July 16, 1949, p. 18.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Lubell, *The Future of American Politics*, (3d. ed., rev.; New York, 1965), pp. 30-31; Mary H. Hinchey, "The Frustration of the New Deal Revival, 1944-46", (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Missouri, 1965), pp. 1-8, p. 12, pp. 56-67, p. 82, p. 103, pp. 156-235; Hamby, p. 12, pp. 61-62, pp. 71-74, pp. 132-34, p. 141, pp. 170-73.

<sup>17</sup> Barton J. Bernstein, "The Presidency Under Truman," *Yale Political*, IV, (Fall 1964), p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> Irwin Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign: The Truman Victory of 1948*, (New York, 1968), p. 263, p. 266; Hamby, pp. 248-49; Susan M. Hartmann, *Truman and the 80th Congress*, (Columbia, Mo., 1971), p. 188; Waltrip, pp. 84-85.

<sup>19</sup> *Congressional Quarterly*, V, (1949), p. 20; Hamby, p. 267; Goldman, p. 85.

<sup>20</sup> While the Republican platform did not mention increasing Federal involvement in the power field, the Democratic one specifically called for Federal "development of hydroelectric power and its widespread distribution over publicly owned transmission lines . . . with preference to public agencies and R.E.A. cooperatives" and "continued expansion of the Rural Electrification Program"; see Kirk H. Porter and Donald Bruce Johnson, comps., *National Party Platforms, 1840-1946*, (Urbana, Ill., 1956), pp. 434-52. Regarding performance, House Republicans, for example, in 1947 had voted 9-186 against a motion to increase funds for reclamation, power and fishery in the Interior bill, while Democrats voted 130-11 for it; see Waltrip, pp. 41-42; *Congressional Quarterly*, IV, (1948), p. 30, p. 34.

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<sup>21</sup> U.S. President, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, (Washington, D.C., 1945-53), *Harry S. Truman, 1949*, pp. 1-7; hereafter cited as *Public Papers: Truman*. Memorandum, the Director of Programs and Finance to the Files, November 9, 1948, Administration and Planning Conferences, Records of the Bureau of Reclamation, R.G. 115, Washington National Records Center. Hereafter, the Center is cited as W.N.R.C.

<sup>22</sup> Letter, Truman to Thomas H. Allen, President, American Public Power Association, May 3, 1949, President's Personal File 4821, Truman Papers, Truman Library. Hereafter, Truman Library is cited as T.L.

<sup>23</sup> See de Luna, pp. 570-71 for a fuller discussion.

<sup>24</sup> See Nelson McGeary, *Gifford Pinchot, Forester, Politician*, (Princeton, N.J., 1960), pp. 74-78, p. 94; Gifford Pinchot, "The Long Struggle for Effective Water Power Legislation," *The George Washington Law Review*, XIV, (December 1945), pp. 11-16; Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), pp. 105-18; Elmo Richardson, *Dams, Parks and Politics: Resource Development and Preservation in the Truman-Eisenhower Era*. (Lexington, Ky., 1973), p. 16; Hamby, pp. 9-10.

<sup>25</sup> Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933: The Years of Crisis*, (New York, 1938), p. 123; William E. Leuchtenburg, "Roosevelt, Norris and the 'Seven Little TVA's,'" *The Journal of Politics*, XIV, (1952), pp. 429-30, p. 436; David E. Lilienthal, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal, Vol. I: The TVA Years, 1939-45*, (New York, 1964), p. 253; Harold L. Ickes, *Secret Diary, Vol. II: The Inside Struggle, 1936-1949*, (New York, 1954), pp. 80-81; Vennard, pp. 109-10; William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal*, (New York, 1963), p. 251.

<sup>26</sup> F. Ross Peterson, *Prophet Without Honor, Glen H. Taylor & the Fight for American Liberalism*, (Lexington, Ky., 1974), p. 38, p. 67; Richardson, pp. 14-15; Markowitz, pp. 41-42.

<sup>27</sup> Richardson, pp. 14-18.

<sup>28</sup> "Address and Remarks at the Dedication of the Kentucky Dam at Gilbertsville, Kentucky," October 10, 1945, *Public Papers: Truman, 1945*, pp. 391-92; "Statement by the President Upon Appointing Gordon R. Clapp as Chairman, Tennessee Valley Authority," October 28, 1946, *Public Papers: Truman, 1946*, p. 473; "Letter to David Lilienthal on His Appointment as Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission," October 28, 1946, *ibid.*, p. 472; "Statement by the President Upon Signing the Government Corporation Act," June 30, 1948, *Public Papers: Truman, 1948*, pp. 388-89; clipping, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, July 15, 1947, O.F. 201, Truman Papers, T.L.

<sup>29</sup> Richardson, pp. 16-17; Peterson, p. 74.

<sup>30</sup> Speech, Truman to the Washington State Press Club, June 10, 1948, *Public Papers: Truman, 1948*, p. 322.

<sup>31</sup> *Public Papers: Truman, 1949*, p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> Letter, Truman to Beauford H. Jester, February 26, 1949, O.F. 284, Truman Papers, T.L.; Richardson, pp. 30-31; *New York Times*, January 25, 1949, 1; *Congressional Quarterly*, V, (1949), p. 763; letters, James E. Webb to Truman, December 30, 1948, and Truman to Krug, January 13, 1949, O.F. 360A, Truman Papers, T.L. The committee later was expanded to include representatives from the Department of the Army, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Federal Power Commission, the National Security Resources Board, the Department of Justice and the Department of State.

<sup>33</sup> *New York Times*, January 30, 1949, III, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, January 25, 1949, p. 3.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, February 14, 1949, p. 35, February 17, 1949, p. 33, March 30, 1949, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> The Department of Commerce was added to the membership in 1946; see Arthur Maass, *Muddy Waters: The Army Engineers and the Nation's Rivers*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1951),

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p. 101, pp. 107-90; *Annual Report of the Federal Power Commission, 1946*, (Washington, D.C., 1947), pp. 111-12.

<sup>37</sup> John R. Ferrell, "Water in the Missouri Valley: The Inter-Agency River Committee Concept at Mid-Century," *Journal of the West*, VII, (January 1968), pp. 96-98; Alfred R. Golzé, *Reclamation in the United States*, (Caldwell, Idaho, 1961), pp. 207-13; *Annual Report of the Federal Power Commission, 1946*, pp. 109-110; *Annual Report of the Federal Power Commission, 1949*, (Washington, D.C., 1950), pp. 150-51; *New York Times*, February 14, 1949, p. 35, February 17, 1949, p. 33, March 30, 1949, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> One reclamation group that was very active in its opposition was the Washington State Reclamation Association to which private power companies in the area made heavy contributions. See *New York Times*, January 25, 1949, p. 3, February 14, 1949, p. 35; report, "Who Finances C.V.A. Opposition?" undated, Office Files of C. Girard Davidson, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>39</sup> Teletype, J.W. Rupley to J. Otis Garber, February 14, 1949, C.V.A.: Legislative Drafts, Memoranda Re Columbia Valley Administration folder, Stephen J. Spingarn Files, T.L.

<sup>40</sup> Letter, Truman to Lew Wallace, January 31, 1949, O.F. 360A, Truman Papers, T.L.

<sup>41</sup> *New York Times*, February 14, 1949, p. 35; memorandum, C. Girard Davidson to Charles S. Murphy, January 28, 1949, Charles S. Murphy Files, T.L.; letter, Hugh B. Mitchell to Truman, January 26, 1949 and telegram, Earl Cole, Secretary of State, Washington, to Truman, January 25, 1949, O.F. 360A, Truman Papers, T.L.; various letters and telegrams to the President from labor organizations, rural electric cooperatives, Farmers' Unions, Granges and Democratic Party organizations in O.F. 360A, Truman Papers and in Columbia Valley Administration folder, Chapman Papers, T.L.

<sup>42</sup> Memorandum, Davidson to Murphy, January 28, 1949, Columbia Valley Authority folder, Charles S. Murphy Files, T.L.

<sup>43</sup> Memorandum, David E. Bell to Truman, March 28, 1949, C.V.A.: Legislative Drafts, Memoranda Re Columbia Valley Administration folder, Stephen J. Spingarn Files, T.L.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, memorandum, William R. Davlin to Bell, February 11, 1949.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, memoranda, Bell to Murphy, February 1, 1949 and February 15, 1949, Bell to Truman, March 28, 1949.

<sup>46</sup> Maass, pp. 20-21, p. 189; The Twentieth Century Fund, *Electric Power and Government Policy, A Survey of the Relations Between the Government and the Electric Power Industry*, (New York, 1948), pp. 486-87; *The Hoover Commission Report on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government*, (Westport, Conn., 1970 [1949]), pp. 282-83; address, H.F. McPhail, "The Development of Power by the Federal Government," Office File of C. Girard Davidson, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>47</sup> Maass, pp. 62-102, p. 215; Waltrip, pp. 20-21.

<sup>48</sup> Maass, pp. 21-30, pp. 46-48; Golzé, pp. 135-40; Waltrip, pp. 42-43; *Congressional Quarterly*, V, (1949), pp. 26-34, pp. 90-91, pp. 94-95; letter, George A. Dondero to Herb M. Moffen, December 6, 1951, File 310, Administrative General, Power Development General, Part 3, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>49</sup> Golzé, p. 297.

<sup>50</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1946*, (Washington, D.C., 1947), p. 77; Waltrip, pp. 21-22.

<sup>51</sup> Golzé, pp. 139-40.

<sup>52</sup> Memorandum, Bell to Truman, March 28, 1949, C.V.A.: Legislative Drafts, Memoranda Re Columbia Valley Administration folder, Stephen J. Spingarn Files, T.L.

<sup>53</sup> Lilienthal, pp. 493-94.

<sup>54</sup> Draft of letter, Paul Raver to Secretary Ickes, February 12, 1946, File 1-310, Administrative General, Power Development, Bonneville Project, General, Part 14, R.G. 48, N.A.



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<sup>55</sup> Straus had at first planned to include a stronger and more open attack on valley authorities in his speech to the state engineers, but changed his mind after he was cautioned by Assistant Secretary of the Interior Warner W. Gardner that while it was all right to say that valley authorities would be necessary if inter-agency cooperation failed, Straus should not "either attack the proponents of the valley authorities or indicate that this would be a disastrous result." See memorandum, Warner W. Gardner to Straus, August 27, 1946 and report, "Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior, No. 44," issued for administrative use only, September 13, 1946 in File 8-1, Organization and Methods, General, Part 15, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>56</sup> The term "308 reports" refers to House Document 308, 69th Congress, 1st session, which first authorized the Secretary of the Army, in 1925, to make estimates of costs of surveys of rivers in the United States with a view toward preparing plans for the most effective and efficient improvement of those waters for navigation, power-flood control and irrigation.

<sup>57</sup> Letter, Brigadier General R.C. Crawford to Colonel Theron D. Weaver, August 1, 1946, File 800-92, Columbia River, Oregon, Washington, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, R.G. 77, W.N.R.C.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, letters, Weaver to Brigadier General R.A. Wheeler, December 31, 1947 and Wheeler to Weaver, January 28, 1948.

<sup>59</sup> Memorandum, Bell to Truman, March 28, 1949, C.V.A.: Legislative Drafts, Memoranda Re Columbia Valley Administration folder, Stephen J. Spingam Files, T.L.

<sup>60</sup> Memorandum, Michael Straus to Herbert J. Slaughter, February 28, 1949, Office Files of the Secretary of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, 1946-49, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>61</sup> Letter, Mitchell to Truman, March 28, 1949, O.F. 360-A, Truman Papers, T.L.

<sup>62</sup> *Congressional Quarterly*, V, (1949), p. 763; *Congressional Record*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., April 19, 1949, XCV, p. 4827.

<sup>63</sup> "Special Message to the Congress Recommending Establishment of a Columbia Valley Administration," April 13, 1949, *Public Papers: Truman, 1949*, 208-13; see also U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Making Appropriations for the Civil Functions Administered by the Department of the Army for the Fiscal Year 1951*, 81st Cong., 2d sess., (Washington, D.C., 1950), pp. 514-15; Richardson, p. 31.

<sup>64</sup> *Congressional Record*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., April 19, 1949, XCV, p. 4740.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4742.

<sup>66</sup> Letter, Bell to Robert Greenleaf, April 27, 1949, Columbia Valley Administration folder, David E. Bell Files, T.L.

<sup>67</sup> Joint Press Release, Department of the Interior and Department of the Army, April 19, 1949, Press Releases, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>68</sup> Letter, Robert P. Patterson, Secretary of War, to Krug, June 10, 1947, File 800.92, Columbia River, Oregon Washington, R.G. 77, W.N.R.C.; identical letters, Truman to Krug and Truman to Royall, June 1, 1948, Floods, Pacific Northwest folder, O.F. 83, Truman Papers, T.L.; Maass, 119-21; memorandum, Acting Commissioner of Reclamation to Krug, July 1, 1948, File 8-3, Bureau of Reclamation Projects, Columbia Basin, Administrative General, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>69</sup> Letter, Davidson to Straus, December 22, 1948, File 8-3, Projects, Columbia Basin, Administrative General, Part 6, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>70</sup> Memorandum, Straus to Krug, January 5, 1949, Office Files of the Secretary of the Interior, Oscar Chapman, 1933-53, Bureau of Reclamation, 1946-1949, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, letter, Davidson to Straus, January 14, 1949.

<sup>72</sup> Memorandum, Truman to Krug, April 12, 1949, Columbia Valley Authority folder, Charles Murphy Files, T.L.

<sup>73</sup> Letters, Truman to Royall, April 18, 1949 and Truman to Krug, April 18, 1949, Floods, Pacific Northwest folder, O.F. 83, Truman Papers, T.L.

<sup>74</sup> Address, Krug to the American Public Power Association, Los Angeles, May 12, 1949, File 1-310, Administrative General, Part 6, R.G. 48, N.A.; Speech and Press Conference of March 2, 1949, Speech and Article File, Krug Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>75</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Public Works, *Hearings, Bills Dealing with the Development of the Water Resources of the Columbia River Basin and the Establishment of a Columbia Valley Administration, and for Other Purposes*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., Part 1, (Washington, D.C., 1949), pp. 271-75, pp. 339-44; *New York Times*, January 25, 1949, 1; memorandum, Krug to Heads of Bureaus and Offices, January 19, 1949, File 1-12, Administrative General, Instructions and Orders, Part 72, R.G. 48, N.A.; U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Public Works, *Hearings, Bills to Reorganize and Consolidate Certain Federal Functions and thereby Secure more Effective Administration by Establishing a Columbia Valley Administration to Assist in the Achievement of Unified Water Control and Resource Conservation and Development of the Columbia River, Its Tributaries, and the Surrounding Lands*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., (Washington, D.C. 1949), Part 1, pp. 655-63, pp. 749-50.

<sup>76</sup> House, Committee on Public Works, *Hearings, Bills . . . [for] Establishing a Columbia Valley Administration . . .*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., Part 1, pp. 655-63, pp. 747-50.

<sup>77</sup> Letters, Charles Sawyer to Dennis Chavez, May 27, 1949, and Sawyer to William M. Whittington, May 27, 1949, General Correspondence File, Records of the Department of Commerce, R.G. 40, N.A.; House, Committee on Public Works, *Hearings, Bills . . . [for] Establishing a Columbia Valley Administration . . .*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., Part 1, pp. 31-35.

<sup>78</sup> Memorandum, John D. Davis for Norman A. Stoll, Acting Administrator, to W.G. Hoyt, October 17, 1949, File 1-318, Administrative General, River Valley Authorities General, Part 4, R.G. 48, N.A.; memorandum, Elmer Staats to Murphy, December 8, 1949, Correspondence and General File, Natural Resources folder, Charles S. Murphy Files, Truman Papers, T.L.

<sup>79</sup> This was particularly true with regard to the Missouri Valley where Federal agencies with vested interests, particularly the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation, along with state governors and business and other local groups, used the inter-agency committee device as a weapon to block a Missouri Valley Authority. It was also used by opponents of the Natural Resources portion of the plan for reorganization of the executive branch recommended by the Hoover Commission and its variant as advised by that body's Task Force on Natural Resources. Friends of the Corps of Engineers in Congress who would not allow the civil functions to be taken away from the Engineers and placed with other water resource functions in one department were so numerous and strategically placed that Truman did not even include this plan among his reorganization proposals to Congress even though both he and the Department of the Interior were on record as favoring it. See report, "Organizing for the Development of the Columbia Valley," undated, Natural Resources, Columbia Valley Administration folder, Stephen J. Spingarn Files, Truman Papers, T.L.; U.S. Congress, Senate, *Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on H.R. 3734 (Civil Functions) for Fiscal 1950*. (Washington, D.C., 1949), pp. 751-52, pp. 770-76, p. 792; Senate, *Hearings on Appropriations for Civil Functions for Fiscal 1951*, pp. 501-02, pp. 514-15; *Hoover Commission Report*, p. 265, p. 271, pp. 180-87; Maass, p. 113; memorandum, The Secretary to Bureaus and Offices, June 14, 1949, Subject File, Krug Papers, Library of Congress; *Electrical World*, April 21, 1952, p. 113; *New York Times*, April 9, 1949, p. 28, May 27, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>80</sup> Senate, Committee on Public Works, *Hearings, Bills Dealing with the . . . Establishment of a Columbia Valley Administration . . .*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., Part 1, pp. 271-75.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 339-44; see also *New York Times*, January 25, 1949, p. 1; memorandum, Krug to Heads of Bureaus and Offices, January 19, File 1-12, Administrative General, Instructions and Orders, Part 72, R.G. 48, N.A.; *Congressional Quarterly*, V, (1949), p. 764.

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<sup>82</sup> Memorandum, Straus to Krug, July 1, 1949, File 8-3, Bureau of Reclamation Projects, Columbia Basin, Administrative General, Part 7, R.G. 48, N.A.; letter, Murphy to Dr. J.R. Binijon, September 14, 1949, O.F. 360, Truman Papers, T.L.

<sup>83</sup> Memorandum, Bell to Murphy, June 29, 1949, David E. Bell Files, Truman Papers, T.L.

<sup>84</sup> *Congressional Quarterly*, VI, (1950), p. 609.

<sup>85</sup> Letter, Kirby Billingsley to Chapman, December 8, 1949, Office Files of Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman, 1933-53, Bureau of Reclamation, R.G. 48, N.A.

<sup>86</sup> January 4, 1950, *Public Papers: Truman, 1950*, p. 8; *Congressional Quarterly*, VI, (1950), p. 609.

<sup>87</sup> *Electrical World*, February 13, 1950, p. 66; Interior Department Press Release, February 2, 1950, File 800.92, Columbia River, Part 5, R.G. 77, W.N.R.C.; Peterson, pp. 75-76.

<sup>88</sup> "Special Message to the Congress Following the Signing of the Rivers and Harbors Bill," May 22, 1950, *Public Papers: Truman, 1950*, pp. 429-30.

<sup>89</sup> "Address at the Dedication of the Grand Coulee Dam," May 11, 1950, *Public Papers: Truman, 1950*, p. 313; letter, Chapman to Taylor, May 19, 1950, Reading File, 1950, Chapman Papers, T.L.

<sup>90</sup> *New York Times*, May 13, 1950, p. 4, August 11, 1950, p. 27.

<sup>91</sup> House, Committee on Public Works, *Hearings, Bills . . . [for] Establishing a Columbia Valley Administration . . .*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., Part 1, p. 305, pp. 389-92, pp. 324-38, pp. 362-64, pp. 717-24; Senate, Committee on Public Works, *Hearings, Bills Dealing with the . . . Establishment of a Columbia Valley Administration . . .*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., Part 1, pp. 622-43, p. 752, pp. 943-44.

<sup>92</sup> See de Luna, pp. 167-68, pp. 420-471, pp. 517-22, pp. 533-34; Maass, p. 117; *Electrical World*, April 21, 1952, p. 113; letter, Secretary Chapman to President Truman, February 18, 1952, Miscellaneous Records, Reading File, 1952, Chapman Papers, T.L.

<sup>93</sup> The five year terms expired in successive years.

<sup>94</sup> See de Luna, Chapter VI.

<sup>95</sup> Newspaper clipping, *Washington Post*, July 6, 1949, O.F. 235, Truman Papers, T.L.; *Congressional Record*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., 1949, XCV, 1435-87; newspaper clipping, *The Washington Evening Star*, May 26, 1950, Wallgren Papers, T.L.; *The Nation*, May 13, 1950, pp. 434-35.