

Editorial . . .

IN REPLY TO GRIBI

Montana Young Republican Club Treasurer Ed Gribi, Jr., insists on trying to confuse the oil issue in the minds of Montana people, whether through THE VOICE, the Cutbank PIONEER PRESS, or the daily newspapers. (See Readers Forum).

Gribi has twice protested VOICE comments relative to the better than 55 per cent Montana oil well completion ratio in the four-month period of December 1955 through March 1956.

This week, in attempting to put words in this Editor's mouth, Gribi asks "how can you say that exploration for oil is more successful in Montana than in the rest of the nation?" Truth is, I didn't say it.

Geologist Gribi would lead you to believe that all new oil production comes under the heading of "exploration". Such is far from the case. In such oil-producing states as Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and California—the major domestic sources of oil production—the overwhelming percentage of new well completions are by no stretch of the imagination exploratory. They are brought in in proven fields. In Montana's Williston Basin during its first five years of oil activity, 1951-1955, much of the oil production came about as a result of exploration. Because Williston, unlike the long-proven areas of the states mentioned above, is new, emphasis has been on exploring and establishing probable boundaries of the various important oil pools in the basin.

When differentiation is made between production in proven areas and unproven areas, the statement by this Editor in May 18 issue that "the industry hit the astoundingly high percentage of better than 55 per cent productive wells of all holes drilled" is shown to have been a very sound statement, Mr. Gribi notwithstanding.—HLB.

Ten Montana Counties Get Land Use Funds

MISSOULA — Governors of the States of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota will soon receive from the Treasurer of the United States checks totaling \$175,452.06 or 25% of the net receipts from ten Land Utilization projects administered by the Northern Region of the U. S. Forest Service, according to Regional Forester P. D. Hanson's recent announcement. Nineteen counties in Montana and western North and South Dakota will share in these funds.

In making the announcement regarding the payment of funds from LU Land receipts, Regional Forester Hanson said these rehabilitated submarginal lands, totaling approximately 3,126,000 acres in the Northern Region, were put under federal management in the 1930's by Title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act. During 1955 these lands brought \$701,808.24 into the Federal Treasury, nearly 23% more than during 1954. The increase is due primarily to increased mineral leasing activity in the past year. Heretofore, grazing use has been the primary use on these rehabilitated submarginal lands, commonly called LU lands.

According to Hanson, the lands are being managed with the co-operation of 32 local grazing districts and associations. Total income from the lands in 1955 from grazing use was \$348,534.58; and from mineral use, principally oil and gas lease rentals, was \$323,479.39. The remaining \$29,794.27 was from miscellaneous uses including haying, cropping, forest products, and easements.

The law providing for these payments to the states earmarks the money for the benefit of public schools and public roads within the counties in which National Forest land is situated.

The counties receiving payments

and amounts in project areas managed by the Forest Service in the Northern Region are as follows:

Blaine, \$10,879.50; Phillips, \$20,040.45; Valley, \$21,171.01; Musselshell, \$4,107.90; Petroleum, \$6,728.97; Fergus, \$3,226.64; Custer, \$3,427.39; Fallon, \$3,680.41; Prairie, \$13,334.39, and Yellowstone, \$1,451.16. Total of \$88,047.82.

\$145.5 MILLION VOTED FOR POWER CO-OP LOANS

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(CNS)—A Senate subcommittee okayed a record-breaking \$2 billion for the Agriculture Department, May 16. The group accepted most increases voted by the House, Senator Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.), chairman, said.

Besides \$1.2 billion earmarked for President Eisenhower's proposed soil bank, the bill provides money for other far-flung USDA work. It includes \$145½ million for loans to power co-ops, \$49½ million for loans to rural phone companies, and \$50½ million in case Rural Electrification Administration wants to loan more.

The Senate group voted \$8½ million for REA's administrative expenses. This was less than President Eisenhower requested but \$400,000 more than last year.

Co-ops Give "Eggbeater" to Alpine Rescue Service

BASIE—(CNS)—Swiss co-ops will give a helicopter to the national life saving air service, as they celebrate International Co-operative Day, July 7. Job of the service is to bring a physician to remote alpine villages in emergencies. The helicopter that co-ops have selected will carry a doctor and two passengers.

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CONDON THANKS MONTANA VOTERS

In thanking the voters of Montana for her renomination, Superintendent of Public Instruction Mary M. Condon Wednesday said "the outstanding primary vote for the office of state superintendent indicates a real interest in, and an awareness of, the importance of education on the part of the people of Montana."

"I sincerely hope that all the unsuccessful candidates will unite with the rest of the education-minded people of Montana to elect the best qualified candidate to this important post in November."

"I want to thank all those who concurred with me that a constructive campaign based on the true issues, is in keeping with the dignity of the office," she concluded.

WASHINGTON NOTEBOOK

By VIC REINEMER, of the Office of Senator James E. Murray

It was 26 minutes after midnight, Memorial Day, when tired senators finally approved the multi-billion dollar highway bill. It now goes to Senate-House conference. Prospects for prompt agreement and approval by the President are excellent.

If the bill as finally approved carries the figures approved by the Senate, here's what Montana will get for its various road systems:

\$355.5 million in federal funds over a 13-year period, to be matched by \$33.7 million in state funds, for the interstate highway system. Total—\$389.2 million. \$65 million, over a period of five years, to be matched by \$49.8 million in state funds, for the primary, secondary and urban road funds. Total—\$114.8 million.

MURRAY TESTIFIES

A Foreign Relations subcommittee last week held hearings on Senator Murray's proposal to establish an International Food and Raw Materials Reserve. Senator Murray testified that "every sort of device including outright, humanitarian give-aways should be employed through the international reserve to end starvation around the world." Business opportunities, he said, would be enhanced by development of the backward areas, and "as Christians, as a Christian nation, we have a moral duty to use our abundance to aid less fortunate men."

Murray told his colleagues that according to the New York Times a Presidential Commission headed by Clarence Francis, former head of General Foods Corporation, has recommended that surplus U. S. food stocks go to the low-income, low consumption areas of the world. However, the report has not yet been made public by the administration, which opposes the Murray plan.

MONTANA LOBBYISTS

Two well-known Montanans were added to the list of registered lobbyists published, in the Congressional Record, as required by law, for the first three months of 1956.

The firm of Wheeler & Wheeler, which includes former U. S. Senator Burton K. Wheeler, is listed as representing Montana Power Co., Pacific Power & Light Co., and Washington Water Power Co.

Lyman Brewster, rancher from Birney, represented the National Livestock Brand Conference.

Other registered Montana lobbyists and their organizations are Joe McElwain, formerly of Deer Lodge, Montana Power Co.; Al Wilkinson, Anaconda Company, and E. W. Rising, Western Beet Growers Association, Great Falls.

YOU CAN AMEND 'EM

The President last week signed two Montana bills. One authorized Custer county to convey certain lands to the Department of the Interior. The other authorized issuance of cer-

State's Most Prosperous First Quarter Came This Year

Montanans can look back upon what have probably been the most prosperous winter months in history, according to a business review appearing in the May issue of MONTANA BUSINESS. The bulletin, published by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research of the Montana State University, reports that although activity was at the annual seasonal low point from January through March, new records for that time of year were set and no evidence of a cyclical downturn, or slackening of pace, occurred.

Nonagricultural employment was higher than for any other first quarter, as were department store sales and bank deposits. The mineral industries, led by petroleum and copper, recorded substantial production gains over January-March 1955. Carloadings were up and electric power consumption, with a very large increase, reflected the influence of the state's new aluminum plant at Columbia Falls. In the one depressed area of economy—agriculture—prices were lower than last year, but larger sales of grain from last fall's bumper crop resulted in an 8.5% increase in total receipts over January-March 1955.

The University publication notes that the months of April, May and June typically see a seasonal upsurge

of industrial activity in the state, more pronounced than for the nation as a whole because of the severity of Montana winters. The extent of the upswing this year will depend in large part upon national developments in the housing industry and the metal markets, and upon the vagaries of Montana weather and its effect upon crop prospects. A large volume of new construction projects in the state will help sustain activity, particularly in the construction field.

While prospects seem good for Montana's nonagricultural industries, MONTANA BUSINESS notes that a further decline will probably occur in agricultural income. Most agricultural prices are currently below last year. The 1956 support price for wheat is slightly lower than for 1955, and this year's crop will probably be considerably smaller than last year's.

Human Relations Group Organizes On Permanent Basis

The Montana Committee On Human Relations meeting in Helena, Thursday, June 7, voted to incorporate as a permanent organization.

The human relations committee has been acting in an informal manner over the past few years while testing the place in Montana for such a group to function.

Started through the sponsorship of Professor Harold Tascher, MSU, and social studies classes the committee has held state Institutes on Indian Affairs, visited Indian Reservations and carried the message of human understanding between Indian and non-Indian into all corners of Montana.

A committee was appointed to draft a constitution and prepare for incorporation as a non-profit organization.

Besides making themselves a permanent organization the members present at the Thursday meeting revised plans of the past few years of holding a state Institute on Indian Affairs. The revision calls for regional institutes, held on or near the seven Indian Reservations if the tribes care to sponsor them.

The institutes will be held at intervals over the next two years to be followed by a state institute, and a committee was appointed to work with the tribes and as a clearing house for scheduling the institutes and providing assistance any group might want.

HOUSE VOTES ON CLOSING 'GOOD FAITH' LOOPHOLE

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(CNS)—The House will vote on tightening the nation's anti-price discrimination laws June 11. A confused situation exists, but those who want to close the "good faith" loophole in the Robinson-Patman act feel confident of success.

The loophole appeared in 1951 when the Supreme Court ruled that a dealer could lower his price "in good faith" to meet a competitor's equally low price. Representative Wright Patman (D-Texas) said the decision violated the intent of the law, which he co-sponsored.

Early in the last session, Patman introduced a strengthening amendment. His bill has been tied up in the Judiciary committee despite his repeated efforts to pry it loose. He resorted to petition to get the bill brought out onto the House floor. This requires 218 congressmen's signatures, and he got the last one May 21.

Patman's bill allows a seller to cut his prices to meet competition, so long as this doesn't tend to destroy competition or lead to monopoly.

Last month, the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Standard Oil (Ind.) had acted in "good faith" in cutting prices. Thereupon, two federal trade commissioners reversed themselves and agreed that Patman's bill is needed if anti-price discrimination laws are to be enforceable.

Now three of the five commissioners want the Justice Department to appeal the Standard Oil case.

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