

Flooding the Grand Canyon: A Phony Issue

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Mr. UDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express shock and indignation at the dishonest and inflammatory attacks made in Washington and New York newspapers this morning against the Colorado River Basin Project Act, a bill I have introduced along with 36 of my colleagues from Arizona and California. While I have a high regard for many of the people who comprise the Sierra Club, the sponsor of these advertisements, I must say that I have seldom, if ever, seen a more distorted and flagrant hatchet job than this.

First off, Mr. Speaker, I should like to comment on the phony photograph appearing in these ads. It shows a scene of the Colorado River with art work depicting waters backed up behind the proposed Hualapai Dam. The caption identifies the scene as Grand Canyon. This is extremely misleading.

I am certain, Mr. Speaker, that the average reader looking at that picture will imagine that he is looking down on Grand Canyon National Park. The prospect of filling even the lower reaches of it with a lake would be disturbing, to say the least. But this impression, which I am sure the Sierra Club wants you to get, is based on a falsehood. This is not Grand Canyon National Park. It is not even Grand Canyon National Monument. It is Lake Mead National Recreation Area, on the one side, and the Hualapai Indian Reservation on the other side. If they had turned their camera downstream instead of upstream, you would have seen Lake Mead itself. Clearly, this is not the Grand Canyon, and to so describe it along with headlines about "flooding the Grand Canyon" is deliberately and flagrantly misleading. I hope my colleagues will not miss the significance of this last-resort tactic of opponents to the Colorado River Basin project. Obviously, with their legitimate arguments answered, they have had to reach to the bottom of the barrel for those of another kind.

An indication of this may be found in a letter to me from David Brower, executive director of the Sierra Club, published in the Sierra Club Bulletin last December. In that letter Mr. Brower denied that his organization was the source of the notion, reflected in much congressional mail, that the Grand Canyon would be flooded by this project. He said in that letter:

Where do you find such an implication? No adversary of the dams, to the best of our knowledge, has ever suggested that the Canyon (or even the inner gorge) would be flooded from rim to rim by the proposed reservoirs. This preposterous idea is attributed to adversaries of the dams by their proponents, who seem to take pleasure in demolishing an argument that no one ever made.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that these ads today give exactly that impression, and I believe that is the impression Mr. Brower intended to give. What does his headline say? It reads:

Now Only You Can Save Grand Canyon From Being Flooded . . . For Profit

And what is the final punchline in one of these ads? It reads:

This time it's the Grand Canyon they want to flood. The Grand Canyon.

I ask my colleagues whether they think Mr. Brower intends to give the American public a true or false impression with these inflammatory words.

These advertisements -- there were actually two of them, published in different editions -- are so replete with falsehoods and distortions that I should like to deal with them, point by point.

The statement is made that these dams would put an end to the "wild, running Colorado River." Now, I submit that either the river is wild and running now or it isn't. Apparently the Sierra Club is taking the view that it is wild and running. However, I do not believe they can have it both ways. One time they tell you that building a dam upstream of Grand Canyon will regulate the flow and destroy its freeflowing course. Another time they tell you, as they do here, that it is freeflowing now. The trouble with these arguments, of course, is that Glen Canyon Dam already exists upstream of Grand Canyon, and it regulates the flow of the river just as much, or as little, as will Marble Canyon Dam a few miles downstream from it.

Of course, they do not mean just this. They also refer to the "dead water" that will be formed in Grand Canyon. Well, there will be a lake, that is true. It will be the lake behind Hualapai Dam, starting 90 miles downstream of the park and extending for 13 miles along its western boundary. You can call that "dead water," if you like, and the term sounds pretty horrible. However, that lake will enable millions of Americans to see for the first time some of the most remote and inaccessible reaches of the Colorado River and to look up upon thousands of feet of cliffs comprising some of the most awe-inspiring scenery any of us have ever seen. In view of the great interest this area will attain because of the lake, I think a better term for it would be "living water," not "dead water."

A further point. Mr. Brower, with his sweeping language, leaves the impression that the heart of Grand Canyon would lose its "wild, running" nature and become a lake. This is false. The natural river, dropping thousands of feet as it flows through the canyon, will remain untouched for 104 miles, including all of the interior of Grand Canyon National Park, an area larger than the State of Rhode Island. The only effect of any kind on the park would be a backing of the lake for 13 miles along the park's western boundary in an area never seen or visited by the general public, and seldom seen even by hardy outdoorsmen.

Joseph Wood Krutch, one of our great conservationists and a good friend of mine, is quoted in one of these ads as describing something as: "the most revealing single page of the earth's history."

This is a wonderful description of the grandeur of the Grand Canyon, but I do not believe Mr. Brower is playing the game fair and square when he applies this quotation to the reaches of the Colorado River affected by the proposed reservoirs. Dr. Krutch was describing the Grand Canyon as a whole when he wrote those words -- not specifically the structure of Bridge or Marble Canyon.

I suppose if we had no people in this country, we could leave everything in its pristine purity. We wouldn't turn a spade of earth to build a single highway. We certainly would not build a single dam -- on the Colorado, the Columbia, or the Arkansas. But we do have people to serve in this country, and compromises must be made. What is proposed here is a modest compromise that leaves untouched the great heart of the canyon and preserves for all time the geological history revealed in its thousands of feet of depth.

Mr. Brower says in one of these ads that the new artificial shoreline would fluctuate on hydroelectric demand, leaving acres of mud when the waterline drops. This is false. Both of these dams are to be operated at constant levels.

Perhaps one of the more fascinating phrases in these ads is the term "commercial power." Another is "for profit." Mr. Brower says that this is the purpose of the dams. Of course, the dams will produce power. That power will be sold for a profit. But, I ask my colleagues, what would be the purpose of generating power that couldn't be sold commercially for profit? All power is commercial power. And any powerplant designed to build up a fund for some purpose obviously has to make a profit. Is this bad?

These dams often are referred to as "cash registers" to finance reclamation works for seven Western States. He suggests that this use of river power to finance reclamation projects is evil and a threat to all national parks. I would simply point out to my

colleagues that this principle has been working for more than half a century, and it has been endorsed by every President of the United States since Theodore Roosevelt. I don't see that as too grave a threat to the parks of this country. In fact, during the same period that this reclamation idea has been operative we have created most of the national park system we know today, including Grand Canyon National Park.

What is more, if what Mr. Brower suggests were made public policy, we would no longer have reimbursable reclamation projects, such as this one, repaying 90 percent of its cost, including interest, to the Treasury. Instead, we would have the taxpayers paying 100 percent of the cost of all future reclamation projects -- or abandon reclamation altogether.

In fact, I suspect that this may well be the unstated intention of many advocates of the Sierra Club point of view. It is shocking to me to see how often the suggestion is made, as it was in a New York Times letter the other day, that the West simply ought to "stop growing." There you have what I regard as the main thrust of the argument being used against us -- in capsule form.

Next we come to an argument that these dams simply would produce "auxiliary power" for industry. Is industry bad? Who buys most of the power produced in this country? And by "auxiliary" does Mr. Brower mean to suggest it is unneeded? Well, if he does, I am a bit puzzled by language used in his second ad, addressed to the Secretary of the Interior. In that one he says this additional power will satisfy the Southwest's "growing appetite for power" for only 3 years, if that. Either this power is needed, or it is not. He cannot have it both ways. And, in any case, I do not quite see what the relevance is to our plan of using power revenues to finance aqueducts to the parched regions of the Southwest.

In any case, I would call Mr. Brower's remarks to the attention of any colleague wondering if there will be a market for this power once it is generated. It may be "auxiliary," but we will need even more in 3 years.

This brings us to perhaps the most wonderful argument of all. The Sierra Club tells us that we would have more water for Arizona if there were no dams because of evaporation losses from the surface of the lakes. This is like saying that we would have more wheat by not harvesting it because some of it will be lost in cutting, threshing, and transporting it to the elevator. Let there be no misunderstanding. Without these revenue-producing dams there will be no aqueducts for Arizona or California. There will be no financing of future water imports or desalinization plants. There will be no reclamation. We may have more water, but it will be out there in the river -- not on our farms or in our city water systems

Incidentally, if this is a reason for not building dams, the same argument applies to Hoover Dam, Bonneville Dam, and all the other great reclamation dams in this country.

The Sierra Club tells us there are "far more efficient power sources" available right now. This is not true. The best engineers in the country assure us it is not true. And the clincher can be found in the fact that opponents of these dams have yet to introduce an amendment to our bill to provide any alternative type of powerplant to finance this reclamation project.

The truth is that neither the Sierra Club nor opponents of these dams in the Congress have any thought that this Nation is about to embark on the construction and operation of steam powerplants for any purpose whatever in competition with the private utility industry. This argument is not offered as a means of improving the bill, but of killing it.

Mr. Brower says the dams will cost more than they can earn. This is a baseless charge. The truth is that this project would not only pay for the dams but the construction and operation of aqueducts and other reclamation facilities as well. It is true that about 10 percent of the cost of the total project -- not just the dams -- would go to recreation and other uses not subject to repayment. But to say that the dams will cost more than they earn is ridiculous.

Reading on, I see that the Sierra Club has the idea that the National Park Service and possibly other bureaus of the Department of Interior have been muzzled by the Secretary of that Department. What you are not told is that provision for a dam at Bridge Canyon was made in the very act establishing Grand Canyon National Park in 1919. And the National Park Service was on record in support of such a dam as early as 1933 -- about the time the present Secretary of the Interior and I were starting to think of ourselves as basketball players in St. Johns, Ariz. I frankly doubt that he could have influenced the statement of Horace Albright, Director of the National Park Service, who in that year wrote:

As I see it the Bridge Canyon project is in no way affected by the Grand Canyon National Monument proclamation; we have had it in mind all the time, the Bridge Canyon project.

Furthermore, I might point out that the position of the National Park Service on this immediate legislation is a matter of public record, available to all. I think it is significant that the Sierra Club has no quotes to give us supporting this charge of muzzling.

In the second of his ads Mr. Brower urges the Secretary of the Interior to stop the Bureau of Reclamation from "ruining" the Grand Canyon. Here again we see the use of wild distortion and inflammatory language to create a false impression in the minds of the public.

He sees the Bureau of Reclamation as a power-hungry giant bent on destroying all our national parks and wild rivers. He writes:

Mr. Secretary, suppose you let your Bureau ruin Grand Canyon with dams. What would the Bureau do for an encore?

Projections show that the dams would satisfy the Southwest's growing appetite for power for only three years, if that. Let's imagine Grand Canyon dammed and its river dead; your fellow Arizonans would have to look right away for new sources of power.

Once again he misses the point. No one suggests that these dams are proposed as the final answer to power needs in the Southwest any more than one who establishes a trust for education expects that it will provide scholarships for all students in all future generations. The only important point is that there is a market for the power, and this market will provide revenues to finance desperately needed reclamation projects.

Mr. Brower speaks of "blind planning." I do not know what kind of seat he occupies to provide him with such omniscience. This project is no harebrained scheme recently concocted by an academy of fools. It is the product of 30 years or more of engineering studies. It has been the subject of exhaustive hearings in several Congresses, and in its original form was passed twice by the U.S. Senate. In this past year the Members of Congress, Governors, and water leaders of seven Western States have devoted thousands of man-hours to drafting, redrafting, and improving this legislation. Call that "blind planning" if you like, I believe it represents more intelligent effort by a hundredfold than has gone into this position by Mr. Brower and the Sierra Club.

And this brings me to a statement in this second ad that Glen Canyon was "destroyed" by the construction of Glen Canyon Dam. I hope Mr. Brower does not try to make that statement to any Member of Congress who has visited the incredibly beautiful lake behind that dam. Known as Lake Powell, it is providing thousands of Americans each year with sights never before imagined. If that is what he means by "destruction," I think he is using a very narrow meaning of the word.

I'm not saying that Glen Canyon Dam should have been constructed just to create that beautiful lake. Glen Canyon was a very beautiful canyon, seen by a handful of adventurers and outdoorsmen, before the dam was built. But while some of that beauty has been lost in the lower depths of the canyon, new beauty has been created,

and now for the first time people can get in there to see it. This, I repeat, is not what most of us would call "destruction."

Mr. Brower refers to a statement of President Theodore Roosevelt which is supposed to be an argument against any dams anywhere around the Grand Canyon. I do not believe that is what President Roosevelt meant at all. Of course he was an advocate of the setting aside of Federal lands for national parks. But he also was the first President to come out strong for reclamation, and evidence of this can be found in my own State of Arizona, where Theodore Roosevelt Dam set the pattern for all other reclamation dams in the West.

Again, we see the use of inflammatory language when Mr. Brower says these dams will "invade the National Park System." Well, let us remember that one of these dams is 13 miles upstream of Grand Canyon National Park and cannot possibly invade it. The other is 80 miles downstream, and its reservoir extends along the boundary of the park 13 miles in a remote area never seen by the public. I would say this is less of an invasion than a "border skirmish."

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues will note, I have been incensed by these charges. I am no enemy of conservation, and my 36 colleagues joining me in this bill are no enemies of conservation. I, for one, fought long and hard for the Wilderness Act. I devoted great time and effort to the Land and Water Conservation Act. I am working right now for passage of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore bill. And I shall continue to work for conservation and park legislation as long as I am in the Congress. To have legislation I have sponsored attacked in this irresponsible manner is highly offensive to me, and I have wanted my colleagues to have the benefit of a prompt reply from me to these attacks on my bill.

What is proposed in the Colorado River Basin project bill is a solution to part of the immediate water needs of Arizona and California and the financing of future water imports or other works to meet the needs of five other Western States.

I hope my colleagues will note that nowhere does the Sierra Club say that the water will be auxiliary or unneeded. It is needed desperately. Our population are growing in the West, and people need water. It is not going to solve the problem merely to tell people to stay home in Wisconsin or Pennsylvania. They are going to come because this Nation is growing, and our population is moving. We cannot tell the West to "stop growing"; it is going to grow whether the Sierra Club likes it or not.

Instead of attacking this legislation as ruining the Grand Canyon the Sierra Club ought to praise the people who have drafted it because it gives such great respect to Grand Canyon National Park and Grand Canyon National Monument. Far from ruining the

canyon these dams will insure that no serious and damaging incursions will occur in the future. The job will be done, and it will be done right.

In my judgment, Mr. Speaker, this legislation marks a great beginning in the long fight to solve this Nation's mounting water crisis. In years past we have always dealt with our water problems on a local, piecemeal basis. For this reason Arizona and California were at odds for years, and we went to the Supreme Court to settle our dispute. Now we are on the same side, working together. I do not think you could find greater evidence of the statesmanship involved in this legislation, or of the significance of what we are attempting to do. What we propose is a regional solution of major water problems. What we succeed in doing here can set the pattern for other regions of the country to follow, and through these acts of water statesmanship we can come to grips at last with the myriad of water problems facing so many of our States.

Mr. Speaker, I have attempted to answer each of the charges made by the Sierra Club in these ads. I hope and trust my colleagues will rest easier knowing that these sweeping charges are either false, misleading, or both. And I can assure my colleagues that neither I nor the 36 cosponsors of my bill would endorse legislation meeting the descriptions applied to it by the Sierra Club today.

Before concluding I should like to refer to a recent statement by Laurence Rockefeller, Chairman of the White House Conference on Natural Beauty, who said:

Conservationists have had to do some rethinking, too. For most conservationists, development had long been an anathema: they have been interested in nondevelopment, and to them the natural foe has been the bulldozer and the builder -- indeed, some conservationists would go almost so far as to include people.

Unswerving hostility to development, however, condemns the conservationists to a rear guard action, and more and more of them are coming to recognize that this is defeatist. If conservation, as I believe, involves the wise use of our renewable resources, those who wish to see better environment for our people must work with the future. Whether one likes it or not, many more houses are going to be built, many more bridges and highways, and the important question is not if, but how.

Mr. Speaker, I believe Mr. Rockefeller is right and the Sierra Club is wrong in this instance. I would hope the Sierra Club would reconsider before proceeding further with this ill-conceived attack on a sound and constructive solution to the water problems of the Southwest. I certainly do not believe it has anything constructive to offer when it concludes one of these ads with this statement:

In five years your Reclamation engineers can close the Grand Canyon show -- the essence and excellence of it -- end it for all our civilization's time.

I trust all who have stuck with me through this rather lengthy speech will understand now how false -- how utterly and completely false -- is that statement. The Grand Canyon show is not coming to an end. It is going to go on for the rest of time. And a lot more people are going to see it than ever before.