

Fertilizer Trust Sells Dirt and Sand, Mr. Hammer Alleges

HE WANTS HENRY FORD TO HAVE MUSCLE SHOALS

Copies of His Speech Urging That Detroit Manufacturer Be Allowed to Make Nitrates Received

"THE BEST PRESENTATION ON THE SUBJECT," SAYS HEATH

Seventh District Congressman Declares That Fertilizer People and Power Corporations Refused to Bid on Big Project Until They Saw Mr. Ford Was Going to Get It.

(From the Monroe Journal of November 10, 1922.)

Fertilizer manufacturers were accused of selling farmers 26 pounds of "inert matter," sand and dirt, with every 100-pound sack of their product by Congressman W. C. Hammer, of this district, in his speech in favor of leasing Muscle Shoals to Henry Ford. This deliverance, copies of which have just been received here, was described by Major W. C. Heath, in his speech introducing Mr. Hammer to his audience at Waxhaw, "as the best presentation of the subject he had read."

Extracts from the speech read: "It was in 1898, the year of our war with Spain, that Sir William Crookes, then president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, called the attention of the scientific world to the fact that we were rapidly nearing the end of our available supply of nitrogen, and nitrogen is one of the most essential elements necessary to maintain life in any form on this planet. We are all familiar, or should be, with the history of what followed the nitrogen experiment that we tried a few years ago. We know how the nitrogen industry was driven out of the United States by the veto of President Taft when an attempt was made to locate such a plant on the Coosa River in Alabama, and the air fixation nitrogen industry from that day to this has been a bogzar at the congressional doorway seeking a supply of cheap hydroelectric power that is necessary for a maintenance of the industry.

"Whether at home or in foreign lands nothing is so inspiring to a patriotic American as to behold the flag of freedom, and I am glad this is so. I am glad that we have an America we can all be proud of, and a flag that we worship with a spirit of devotion, but I bow my head in shame when I read the nitrogen record of this great country of ours.

"In spite of the fact that during the year 1917 we imported from Chile two hundred and fifty-three 5,000 ton shipments of nitrate of soda the Ordnance Department in October of that year was confronted with a very large deficiency in the supply of explosives and finally, 17 months after Congress had provided the way and the means for the solution of the war-time nitrogen emergency, the Ordnance Department turned to the only people on this continent with commercial experience in the business which they were trying to develop, namely the American Cyanamid Co., and nitrate plant No. 2 at Muscle Shoals, with its annual capacity of 110,000 tons of ammonium nitrate, containing 40,000 tons of pure nitrogen—equivalent of 250,000 tons of Chilean nitrate, which is the amount of nitrate used in a normal year by American agriculture. This great plant was the result, but 17 months of priceless time had been lost due to misperception or incorrect views as now in the light of time fully appears, and when the plant was ready to offer the relief and make available the great tonnage of explosive material that was necessary the sacrifices had been made and the war had been won.

"Then followed the breaking up of a great war machine, a period of salvage, and the return to a peace-time basis. The administration, approving the fact that Congress had said in making the original appropriation for the nitrate plants, that these plants should produce nitrates and products for munitions of war and useful in the manufacture of fertilizer, and other useful products," sent experts to Europe to work out a plan for the utilization of the nitrate plants.

The Special Interests Intervened.

"Meanwhile certain special interests which for years has been doing out to the farmer his nitrogen supply in this country looked with no small concern at the prospect of the building up a great nitrogen industry in America, but they knew that the plant was an explosive plant that for its conversion to a manufacture of fertilizer products would require the investment of many millions of dollars. These interests then decided that the United States nitrate plants should not be operated by anyone in the production of fertilizer.

"A ready answer, therefore awaited the federal nitrate director, Dr. Arthur Graham Glasgow, when he approached the presidents of the great fertilizer companies. He offered them the use of these nitrate plants free of any rental or other charge whatever until they should earn 9 per cent on such capital as they might invest, and thereafter, he proposed, that they divide any additional profits with the government, but with one accord they tumbled him down sideways.

"An effort was also made to get certain financiers in New York to undertake to form a company to operate these plants. Some consideration was given to the scheme and no investigation was made of the interests of the

trusts having declined the opportunity to operate the plants until they had secured to bombard the members of Congress with propaganda adverse to the proposal that the government should operate the plant, and when the bill was passed by the Senate, it died in the house committee on military affairs and the fertilizer companies and other big interests rejoiced and were made glad. It looked as though these interests had won.

The scrapping process at Muscle Shoals had already begun, and shipments of materials were going out from the nitrate plants when the farmers, who had fought for the preservation and operation of these plants from the beginning, called on Secretary of War Weeks and asked him if he would undertake to secure proposals for the purchase or lease of the government's property at Muscle Shoals. He agreed to do so, and once more these various interests, including the hydroelectric power companies of the southeastern states, were given an opportunity to bid on the property. Once more the answer was, unanimously 'no'. Not an offer was made, and the house had rejected the amendment appropriating \$10,000,000 for continuing the work at Muscle Shoals. The project was a dead issue until out of the blue there dropped the thunderbolt of Henry Ford. (Applause.)

"Here was a rank outsider who did not belong to the fraternity, who had the audacity to oppose the well laid plan of these thoroughly entrenched interests. The nerve of Ford was astounding. Something had to be done, some offer had to be put in to meet the proposal of Henry Ford; and, after hasty conferences behind closed doors, it was decided that the Alabama Power Co. was the logical party to present a bid which, it was confidently expected, would be more than a match for the Ford proposal. Meanwhile, encouraged by the unfriendly reception which the proposal was receiving at the hands of the Secretary of War, other bidders of unknown responsibility began to appear until five or six proposals had been made for the property which previously had been considered on its way to the national junk heap with the entire consent and approval of the opposing interests.

Dubious House Committee Report.

"For seven months the Ford proposal was in the office of the Secretary of War, and finally the Secretary sent it to Congress, not with a recommendation, but with a letter of comment, in which his friendly attitude toward the offer was apparent, and after months of voluminous hearings in which the intents and purposes and motives of Mr. Ford were bitterly assailed the majority of the committee finally reported a recommendation for the acceptance of his offer. Doubtless to the astonishment of the other bidders their proposals, including that of the Alabama Power Co., did not even receive serious consideration.

"Just why the majority of the military committee should elect to play into the hands of the Alabama Power Co. by reserving the right to sell to that company the government's interest in the steam plant at Gorgas, Ala., and undertaking to 'accept' the Ford proposal on this basis it is hard to understand.

"During the war, when it was necessary to provide a supply of electric power for nitrate plant No. 2 at Muscle Shoals from a source immediately available, the government had asked the Alabama Power Co. to cooperate in an effort to secure this power quickly. After much negotiation, which was brought to a hasty conclusion on the day of the false report of the signing of the armistice, the company entered into a most remarkable arrangement with the government whereby the government placed an additional unit in its power plant and paid the Alabama Power Co. a profit of \$280,000 for installing this government property on the Alabama Power Company's own land.

Alabama Power Company Overlays Its Hand.

"This contract, which had been denounced in vigorous terms by the Attorney General and the acting Judge Advocate General, sought to turn every possible change of circumstances to the advantage of the Alabama Power Co. Under its terms, by a simple expedient of supplying water to the government at a price almost twice as high as the price of four mills per kilowatt hour asked by the Union Gas & Electric Co. in its contract to supply power for nitrate plant No. 3 at Cincinnati, Ohio, and applying part of the power charges on the purchase of the unit, the Alabama Power Co. would ultimately have become the owner of the government property with no cost to it whatever. But the Alabama Power Co. overplayed its hand by refusing to bid on the government property until after the Ford bid had come in, and then, seeing the futility of attempting to secure this power plant under a contract with the highest legal authority in the administrative branch of the government had declared null and void, the company finally came out with an offer of \$2,500,000—which I believe was subsequently raised to \$3,000,000—for the purchase of the Gorgas plant, which had been built by the Alabama Power Co., as herebefore stated, under a long and difficult contract to understand with the United States at a cost of about \$5,

000,000 to the American taxpayers, \$280,000 of which was clear profit to the Alabama Power Co. The Alabama Power Co.'s position for years has been one of anticipation that the Muscle Shoals power project in its entirety would fall into its hands, as its clearly seen by all who have taken the time to study and understand its operations.

"Is it not the duty of the government to bear the burdens of the rich, as has been demonstrated in the action of this congress in its tariff and revenue bills and in attempting to pass the ship subsidy bill and other legislation? And now, in the closing days of this session, instead of attending to the public business the majority leaders have decreed a program of adjournment from day to day and refuse to permit consideration of Muscle Shoals or other legislation to the interest of the farmer and the public generally. It is not due these leaders are so scared about the doom which awaits them at the coming election they refuse to permit the house to function until it is becoming less and less useful, as a branch of the government, so much so that even Secretary of War Weeks says this congress has reached the lowest ebb of any congress in the entire history of the nation?"

"Even the staid old Boston Transcript declares this is 'the worst house in many years, breaking more pledges than any congress in 20 years, its leaders being leaders in name only, and for the most part they represent either the worst of the most stupid in either party today, and by its record is unworthy of another lease of power.'

Conditions are such that other great Republican newspapers condemn the house in equally strong terms.

Ford to Work Out Farm Problems.

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RED CROSS NEWS

The farmers have almost completed their fall harvesting. The school here is progressing nicely with Miss Gladys Pressnell as teacher.

Mr. Balf Pugh's children, who have been right sick with scarlet fever, are recovering.

Miss Amanda Hinshaw, of Greensboro, was a recent visitor to homefolks.

Arthur, the little son of Mr. and Mrs. John Garner, who has been critically ill with diphtheria, is improving.

Corn huskings seem to be right numerous in this section.

Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Ingold are the proud parents of a fine baby boy.

We are pleased to have our former pastor, Rev. W. F. Ashburn, back on the charge another year.

Mrs. Charley Burrow and daughter, Miss Ila, spent Friday at the home of Mr. H. J. Fields.

Mr. Clarence Fields, from Franklinville high school, spent the week-end with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harris Fields.

Miss Viola Garner, from Greensboro high school, has been spending a few days with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Monroe Garner.

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"Mr. Ford also has a provision in his offer about research that is causing no end of anxiety to those who have feasted and fattened so long upon the public. What do the fertilizer companies want with research? They have been doing business for 50 years with little or none of it, and they have finally educated the farmer to buy their 'Wonder Worker Corn Grower' with his eyes shut. They have sold him dirt and sand, inert matter, for years, all nicely sacked and neatly labeled, and if the compound contained only 12 pounds of plant food and 88 pounds of inert matter in a 100-pound sack that was no fault of theirs. The very nature of the kind of business they were doing required that it be done that way, as though the farmer did not have enough sense to mix the 12 pounds of plant food with 88 pounds of dirt and sand from his own farm, thereby greatly saving freight rates. And then by this method the railroads received more freight, and, again, a 100-pound sack looks like it is worth more than a 12-pound sack. (Applause.)

"It was merely the result of using the raw materials that are available. To be sure, there had been disconcerting moments when inventors had brought out new processes, but, happily for the fertilizer interests, the patents could be purchased and locked up in a safe, without disturbing their normal business operations. But here comes this fellow Ford with a pile of cash as big as the Pyramid of Ghizeh and sends along his chief engineer to testify that he is ready to spend more than \$50,000,000 to work out the farmers' problems. Of course, it is preposterous, say these interests.

Ford Does Not Need This to Make Money.

MR. M. F. TOLBERT GIVES HIS OPINION ON POLITICS

After six years of uninterrupted control by the corrupt Republican party, Randolph county is again in the hands of the old Democratic party, the party that never has failed to serve the people.

Under the fostering care of democracy, our great county has been raised from the depths of despair into which she was plunged by the Republican party, back in the dark days of hutlerism, into one of the most progressive counties in the Old North State. After sixteen years of honest, clean government disension again raised its awful head in an evil hour, and our great county has been going backward and headed for ruin for the last six years, under control of the party of promises.

The Republicans went all over the county boasting of the great record they had made, but they never mentioned the thousands of dollars of the people's money they have squandered. Everything they have to their credit during their six years control is a county home, and they would never have built this if Mr. Harding had been defeated. Times got so tough after his election they were compelled to build the home to take care of some of the less fortunate.

For the past six years our county has been smarting under the blistering shame of Republican rule, but at last the people have seen the light, and arose exultant as upon an eagle's wings above the morass above the snows of the cold mind to the warm ether of a new day. The people at last have awakened to the fact there is but one party worthy of leading the people of Randolph and Jackson, the party of Jefferson and Jackson, the party that was not born to die.

The great victory for justice and righteousness did not stop when democracy drove the enemy out of Randolph, it extended from the mountains to the sea. County after county that never knew what democracy was before, has at last seen the dawn of a new day. The victory for the party that stands for the masses of the people in the Tar Heel state is complete, and the party of prejudice, hatred and malice has been buried in shame and without any funeral whatever. It is indeed a banner day for the Old North State. This great victory didn't stop here. The strong arm of Democracy reached out over the land from Maine to California and swept out of office everything that claimed kin with the Harding administration. This crowd has received the greatest rebuke ever dished out to any party.

The old Democratic party suffered defeat two years ago, but today she is standing on that seven million Harding majority with her face to the rising sun, marching on full of hope, and only one more short step to take, and the great party based on principle and justice will be in control of our national affairs, and our government will again be in hands of the people.

We are now about two years deep in the Harding dynasty and it has already reached the noon-tide and is on the turn of the hill and is headed downward at the speed of a Cadillac with the breaks off, and what remains of the mass of wreckage will be scattered over the land on the sad day that is sure to overtake them.

For a long stretch of years under the leadership of our great President Woodrow Wilson, prosperity reached out over the land, and hope took the place of despair. Opportunity knocked at every man's door and there were growth and development along all lines. But for some reason we forgot what we had suffered under Republicanism in days gone by. Forget the blessings we had enjoyed following our political redemption.

Our defeat two years ago was a terrible set-back, but it served to teach us a lesson that we will not forget. The Democratic party stands today the party of all the people, standing for honesty and integrity in public service, and equal opportunity to all, and will fight to the death the Republican party because it believes it is a continual menace to progress and equal opportunity. Founded upon principles of justice, trust, equal rights the Democratic party cannot die. It was not born to die.

M. F. TOLBERT, Pinson, N. C.

Methodist Matters. (W. H. Willis.) Twenty-two of our Epworth Leaguers attended the district union meeting at Liberty Thursday.

Mr. J. O. Redding has been made assistant to the district lay leader, by the district board of lay activities. Architect Barton is perfecting the plans for the new Methodist church to be built on Fry'sville street.

Mr. D. B. McCrary and the writer attended the district upward meeting at Greensboro Wednesday. The salary of the presiding elder for this district has been advanced from \$3,600 to 4,000.

De KING'S PILLS - for constipation. Sure relief from biliousness.

Send them. No reasonable-minded man can claim for a moment that Henry Ford needs Muscle Shoals to make money; he has a well-demonstrated working plant for that purpose at Detroit, Mich., which is one of the wonders of the world in modern industries, and it is turning out tractors and automobiles at the astounding rate of 5,000 per day. But, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to Mr. Ford, it can hardly be said that it is desirable to go down in history merely as a maker of 'bivers', however successful in that art he may be, and it is easy to appreciate that in

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Lips cracked and sore?