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PWA ABANDONS PLAN FOR SPAN OVER POTOMAC

Lack Of Funds Cited For Loss Of Project President Put In "Must" List

Susquehanna Bridge Gets O.K. When Bankers Designate It As First Choice

By C. P. TRUSSELL

[*Washington Bureau of The Sun*]

Washington, Sept. 22—The Southern Maryland PWA bridge that was to span the Potomac at Morgantown today became an abandoned project—eighteen days after President Roosevelt had visited its site and declared it "must be built just as fast as we can possibly do it."

Abandonment was attributed officially not to a refusal of Maryland bankers to finance the State's share of the two-bridge program, pressed by the Administration during the latter days of the recent Senatorial primary campaign, but to the fact that the PWA itself lacked the money to go through with the plan.

From the remaining quota funds—State quotas are set by the PWA and are kept secret—Federal grants, it was explained, could not be made to both the Potomac span and a $4,815,000 bridge across the Susquehanna river at Havre de Grace.

Bankers Given Choice

Faced with a choice of one or the other, but not both, the Maryland financiers chose the Susquehanna project as the more feasible.

The PWA followed suit and the President gave his approval. With this official O. K. there was tendered a grant of $2,167,000. The Maryland State Roads Commission is to raise the balance from the loans which the bankers have agreed ot make.

Discovery that Maryland's PWA quota balance would not cover the Federal contributions to two bridges, it developed during the day, had not just been made.

Believed Known During Purge

It was known, at least to the PWA, it was asserted in inside quarters, when the President, accompanied by Representative David J. Lewis, inspected the Potomac span site in the course of his attempted personal purge of Senator Tydings early this month.

Hence, it was conceded that the PWA's inability to finance a pair of bridges without disregarding quota limitations was known in some official quarters when President Roosevelt, two days before the Maryland primary, directed the PWA to give right-of-way to both the Susquehanna and Potomac projects.

Only two days ago the President, in discussing the bridge program, indicated that it was his impression that $5,000,000 to $6,000,000 remained in Maryland's quota account.

Nice Agreed To Plan

In detail he told of acquiescence by Governor Nice to a cutting of the original three-bridge program to two spans, so as to provide two links out of an ultimate three between Baltimore and Richmond before the quota expired automatically on October 1.

Drawing a dark picture of Maryland's prospects of getting these two links, Mr. Roosevelt blamed the Maryland bankers for placing the program in jeopardy through refusal to agree to a loan on the bridges.

Yesterday, as it developed that the bankers had agreed to finance both

Police Magistrate's Non-Contempt Record Near To Being Wrecked

Magistrate John O. Rutherford has been officiating in Traffic Court for nearly four years—and is proud of his record of never having fined anyone for contempt of court. He nearly ruined his record yesterday.

Fined $6.45 for parking his automobile on Patterson Park avenue without lights, on September 1, Julius Hoffman, 40, refused to accept the magistrate's verdict and yelled: "I'll see the Governor. I'll even see the President. You can't do this to me."

But they could. Hoffman, who gave an address in the 700 block Debelius avenue, was dragged from the courtroom by a couple of bailiffs and sent to jail when he refused to pay the fine. The magistrate mopped his forehead and went on to the next case.

OFFICE BUILDING PLANS APPROVED

Public Works Board Authorizes Asking Of Bids On Monday

New Effort To Be Made To Get PWA Funds For State Structure

The Board of Public Works yesterday approved final plans for construction of the new State Office Building at Annapolis and ordered architects to advertise for bids Monday.

William S. Gordy, Jr., State Comptroller, who, with Governor Nice and Hooper S. Miles, State Treasurer, is a member of the board, declared another attempt will be made to obtain PWA funds to finance the structure.

Mr. Gordy said the first application for Federal funds "was turned down without any reason being given."

Plans Are Examined

The board examined the plans for the four-story modern structure with Henry P. Hopkins and Laurence H. Fowler, architects. The building, to be of Colonial type, will face College avenue, directly across from the Government House.

College avenue is to be widened from its present twenty-seven-foot width to thirty-two feet. Parking areas will be provided in the rear of the building, off Carroll avenue.

The building, to be built at an estimated cost of $650,000, will be air-conditioned throughout, with storage rooms on the fourth floor and in the basement.

One wing of the proposed office building will be separated by a four-and-a-half-foot alley from the State Armory. Maj. Gen. Milton A. Reckord, commander of the Maryland National Guard, had recommended that the armory be torn down and a new one constructed elsewhere in Annapolis.

May Be Demolished

Under present plans, the armory will not be demolished, but board members indicated that if it interfered with the construction of the new building it would be torn down.

Architects were directed to ask for bids for the construction of the building, for the demolition of houses now on the site, and for the demolition of the armory. The offers will be opened October 11 at Mr. Miles' office at Annapolis.

The construction of the building, delayed by protracted arguments over its site, was authorized by a $1,000,000 appropriation by the last Legislature.

[*Picture on Page 4*]

RFC CHAIRMAN BACKS SLASH IN B. & O. INTEREST

Banks And Insurance Company Also Approve Reductions

Support Revealed In Testimony Of Willard Before I. C. C.

[*Washington Bureau of The Sun*]

Washington, Sept. 22—Jesse H. Jones, chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and representatives of insurance companies and savings banks today gave their approval to the plan of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to reduce the fixed interest rates on a portion of its securities.

This support was made known at a hearing held before the Interstate Commerce Commission, at which Daniel Willard, president of the B. & O., and George M. Shriver, senior vice-president, appeared to explain the plan. No opposition developed at the hearing, and the I. C. C., after taking the testimony, took the plan under advisement.

Shriver Explains Debts

Mr. Jones' support of the plan was made known by Mr. Shriver, who first explained that the company's indebtedness to the RFC amounts to $72,771,578. If the plan is approved by the I. C. C., Mr. Shriver said, it is anticipated that this RFC loan may be extended for five years from August, 1939, at four per cent.

In a letter to Mr. Shriver, dated yesterday, Mr. Jones said the RFC would consider favorably the plan relating to the RFC loans, with the provision that the plan be declared operative before next January 1.

"In view of your company's fine record over a long period of years," Mr. Jones added, "it is to be hoped that you will be successful in your efforts to bring about a readjustment of your fixed charges without resort to the courts."

Walker Is Witness

Support from the insurance companies and the savings banks was voiced by Frederick W. Walker, vice-president of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, and Fred N. Oliver, general counsel for the National Association of Mutual Savings Banks, both of whom testified at the hearing today.

Under the B. & O. plan, Mr. Walker said, the total fixed interest on the railroad's securities owned by Northwestern Mutual would be reduced from $575,000 to $298,000 annually, with the balance to be paid if earned and to be cumulative. He said, in view of this reduction, careful consideration was given the plan and the conclusion was reached that it was in the interest of the creditors and the public generally and should be approved.

Mr. Walker pointed out the plan was developed as the result of numerous conferences between representatives of the railroad, life insurance

(Continued on Page 20, Column 7)

6,000 MORE B. T. U's. THAN GASOLINE

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