The Arizona Daily Star
STATE CONSOLIDATED PUBLISHING CO.
TUCSON, ARIZONA

November 15, 1934

My Dear Miss Tarbell;

Your letter to Mr. Mathews arrived today, but he is on the coast where he went following the loss of his daughter and I am answering it as best I can for him. The enclosed clippings will give you an idea of the situation at the moment and tomorrow I shall try to send you some more.

While the whole Colorado project is an injustice to Arizona, in fact is simply a case of the federal government building a water works for Los Angeles, I have been impressed with the idea that the facts in the case have had far less to do with the bitterness than the nature of the campaign made for the dam. Congress was persuaded to vote the Boulder Dam act on the flood control theory. It was given vivid pictures of what would happen if the river broke away and drowned ten thousand people in the Imperial valley. The facts are that the only flood in history, which created the Salton sea in 1906 I think it was was, was caused by the Gila river which flows into the Colorado 100 miles below the dam which obviously could not control it.

The other bitterness was that the congress acted upon the assumption there was a Santa Fe pact dividing the waters among the states, although no such pact existed. And a third point was that although there is not a drop of California water in the river, the bill finally was passed without a pact but to take effect when any six states out of the seven in the basin (provided California was one) approved it. In other words, six neighbors get together and confiscate the property of the sixth simply because they wanted it.

Add to that that Hiram Johnson has twice sold out California for the privilege of naming the secretary of the interior, you can imagine that the bitterness has not been allowed to die. Governor Moeur conceived his

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"repel invaders" move purely for dramatic effect and after advising the President of what he had done won the first recognition from Washington that possibly Arizona had some rights in the river.

That's ~~in~~ about the lineup from the popular angle. The technical side is involved, terribly involved. For example, the 1,200,000 acre feet now in dispute would not go to anyone else if it is refused to Arizona. It will flow on into Mexico and under international law and the principal of "prior use", the only water law in the west, it is probable it could never be recovered for the United States.

I haven't forgotten the kind things you said about me in the Delineator article and certainly am glad to be of any service I can to you in this connection. The clippings I am sending are a haphazard collection, available at the moment, but I will see that you get some really authentic information muy pronto.

Sincerely,

Talbot T. Smith

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