

Clark's Hill, Allatoona, 3-River Dams In Hands of Solons Holding Purse

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WASHINGTON, June 7—The fate of three major Federal hydroelectric and navigation developments on Georgia rivers hinges on

hearings now going on before a Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. That Subcommittee, concerned

with civil functions of the War Department and headed by Rep. Albert Engel, Republican, of Michigan, already has heard Lt. Gen. Raymond Wheeler and Col. Peter Feringa, of the Army Corps of Engineers, on present Government justification of appropriations to initiate and continue these projects, which are, by name:

Clark's Hill flood control, navigation and power development on the Savannah River; the inland waterway and power dam constructions along the Chattahoochee-Apalachicola-Flint Rivers; and the Allatoona hydroelectric and power dam on the Etowah River. All have been approved by Congress and are awaiting money to be initiated or to be continued.

The Subcommittee has just begun, and will continue through Tuesday, to hear outside witnesses, pro and con, concerning the projects.

The major bone of contention among the three, apparently, is the triple-purpose Clark's Hill development.

Charles Collier, Vice President of the Savannah River Electric Company, appeared Friday before the Subcommittee to protest appropriation of further funds for the dam. About \$4,500,000 was appropriated by Congress for initial construction, but only about \$1,000,000 has been spent for preliminary planning.

The representative of the Company, an affiliate of Georgia Power, maintained that it was ready, willing and able to build the dam, and private enterprise should be given first priority on such construction.

Rep. Paul Brown, of the Tenth Georgia District, will appear before the Subcommittee in support of the project. Also supporting it will be the Governor of South Carolina.

Collier was scheduled to appear Thursday afternoon, but was put over until Friday because of lengthy testimony by previously-scheduled witnesses on the earlier day.

Rep. Henderson Lanham, of the Seventh Georgia District, also resumed on Friday the fight for more funds to continue the Allatoona Dam, on which Army Engineers have been proceeding with actual construction. Its initial appropriation also was \$4,500,000.

The Rome Congressman presented the Subcommittee members a graphic picture of the periodic floods that ravage the fertile acres along the Etowah and inundate the cities of Rome and Cartersville. He pointed out that the January, 1947, flood in Rome, alone, caused damage near the half-million dollar mark.

The dam also is expected to produce hydroelectric power to meet the electricity needs still unfulfilled by the gigantic units of the Tennessee Valley Authority to the north.

On Tuesday, the Subcommittee will resume testimony on Georgia projects when it hears a delegation from Georgia, augmented by delegations from Alabama, and Florida, on behalf of the development along the Chattahoochee-Apalachicola-Flint Rivers.

Mayor Hartsfield, of Atlanta, along with Rep. James C. Davis, of the Fifth District, is scheduled to present claims for funds to start construction of Buford Dam, near Atlanta. The Buford Dam, a \$20,000,000 project, is one of several dams to be spotted along the triple-river project. It will serve Atlanta mainly as a reservoir, and the Chattahoochee Valley as a device for flood control and electric power. The Mayor and his group will leave Atlanta Sunday.

Among others who will attend the hearing are Georgia Senate Pres. William T. Dean, of Conyers, Senator from the Thirty-fourth Georgia District; Rep. Paul S. Etheridge, of Fulton County; Julius McCurdy, representing Scott Candler, DeKalb Commissioner; J. J. Baggett, of Lawrenceville; Winfield Rowe and Dr. Earl Simpson, of Buford.

From Columbus, in the interests of dams scheduled to be constructed on the same river in the vicinity of that city, will come Mayor Bentley H. Chappell, who has sent the Subcommittee a list of other persons from Columbus who wish to speak in behalf of the waterway development. He listed these as: Jack Key, William D. Swift, Wilson Williams, Thurston Crawford, Col. E. A. Greene, of Ft. Gaines; J. H. Job and Walter Brown, of Albany; Grady Bell, of Bainbridge, and Ed Stevens, of Dawson.

Whether this supporting testimony will have any effect on the economy-minded Subcommittee can be only a matter of conjecture until the hearings are completed.