

Phila. Wants Too Much, WPB Says in Dispute Over Water Program

By HUGH MORROW
Inquirer Washington Bureau
WASHINGTON, Nov. 20.—A War Production Board source said today that Philadelphia "is trying to build a permanent water system in wartime, and the materials simply are not available."
"This course and other indications that everything possible would be done to give the city enough materials for waterworks improvements to maintain the supply throughout the war, emphasizing that the city's plant was in "terrible" condition, and that Philadelphia's vital role as war production center was thoroughly appreciated here.

MUST LIMIT MATERIALS
But they also made it clear that the thousands of tons of critical materials needed to give the city waterworks improvements which would last for the next 20 years or more simply could not be spared.
"There is no doubt that Philadelphia's waterworks are in bad condition," one WPB official said. "Engineers report that those old steam pumps pound so hard they almost lift the floor."
NEESON DISPUTED
"But no city, so far as I know, has obtained anything like the amount of critical materials that Philadelphia is seeking. It just isn't available."
A charge made yesterday by Philadelphia Director of Public Works John H. Neeson that "certain people" could have obtained new electric water pumps for the city had been gone to them instead of being the city's case "upon merit," was dismissed with an assertion "merit is absolutely the only basis on which these things are decided."

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Only One Firm Bids On Water Works

An invitation by the Department of Public Works for bids for construction of a new pumping station at Torresdale produced only one bid yesterday—a bid of \$1,088,888 from the Kaufman Construction Co., 369 Race St.
The proposed contract would cover construction of a building to house the station, piping, valves and other accessories. Failure of the city to obtain higher priority ratings than the A-14 and A-15 ratings granted for necessary materials was blamed for the reluctance of other contractors to bid.
John H. Neeson, Director of Public Works, did not announce what action will be taken on the Kaufman bid, pending detailed study of the offer. The department is "in study" of the bid received last week for a new preliminary treatment plant at Queen Lane pumps.

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Philadelphia Water Department
Historical Collection
2004.019.0007A

Final Plea Today On Water Repairs

Final plea to the War Production Board for approval of a partial rehabilitation of Philadelphia's water system when conferences start here today between representatives of the WPB and the Department of Public Works.
Arthur E. Gorman, chief of the Water Section of WPB, is to re-inspect the city's water distribution system today and tomorrow. He and other WPB officials also will confer with Mayor Jean, chief of the Water Bureau, and John H. Neeson, Director of Public Works.

WPB Should Act on Water System

Reports from Washington that the War Production Board may, after all, grant this city priorities for the modernization of part of the water system are encouraging—if true. The in-and-out of the WPB on this issue have been so confusing that absolute dependence on the latest rumors is out of the question.
The city has been trying for months on end to install badly needed pumps. Every time it has seemed to approach some successful conclusion in its negotiations a last-minute hitch has developed.
The Philadelphia water supply has a special importance because of the many war industries here. Even a Washington bureaucrat ought to be able to foresee the consequences should the system break down. Perhaps the WPB is finally becoming aware of the merits of the long-delayed rehabilitation project.
Meanwhile, however, we shall keep our fingers crossed.

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WPB to REINSPECT WATER SETUP HERE

Priorities to Depend on Checkup of Facilities Starting Today

The extent to which Philadelphia will be permitted to rehabilitate its water supply system will be determined by a further inspection of the system to be begun today, by Arthur E. Gorman, chief of the War Production Board's water section.
What priorities the city will receive for the work depend upon the recommendations he makes to Herbert S. Marks, director of the WPB power division, which includes the water section.
In Washington, Marks stated that he believes Gorman's inspection will "clear the air," and a decision could be expected by the end of the week.
Gorman will be accompanied by John H. Neeson and Seth Van Loan, chief of the War Production Board's water bureau.
Marks announced that Gorman would give particular attention to the chlorinating plants to ascertain what repairs may be required to keep them functioning for the duration and also will inspect pumping stations.
Neeson's request for release of 15 new pumps already on order is still being considered, he indicated that no more than two of them would be authorized for Philadelphia with the rest to go to other localities.

Another Water Works Inspection

If the city treasury had a dollar for each time the water system has been inspected by an official inspection, Philadelphia would have been out of the financial woods long ago.
This remark is prompted by the announcement that once again, for the umpteenth time, the water plants, or what is left of them, are to be given the once-over, this time by a gentleman from Washington sporting the title of chief of the War Production Board's water section.
The official, presumably, is to determine whether the city actually needs the new equipment and report on his findings to another official. What will happen after that is anybody's guess. For in many months the city has been getting nothing out of the run-around on its application for water plant materials.
Whether the city actually needs the new equipment or not, the inspector takes a good look at our on-down system and will report to his superior himself what the consequences of a breakdown would be in a city turning out billions of dollars worth of war materials, he should rush back to Washington with a frantic signal for approval of our application.

WPB MAN TO STUDY WATER SYSTEM

His Checkup will Guide U. S. in Determining City's Needs

(By a Bulletin Staff Correspondent)
Washington, Dec. 8.—Arthur E. Gorman, chief of the Water Section of the War Production Board, will go to Philadelphia tomorrow for a two-day inspection of the city's chlorinating plants and for a final appraisal of Philadelphia's needs for WPB assistance in the rehabilitation of its water system.

WPB sources said today that Gorman's checkup on the spot would be followed, probably by the end of the week, by his specific recommendations on Director of Public Works Arthur E. Gorman's application for WPB priorities assistance.

Final decision is expected to be made by Herbert S. Marks, acting chief of WPB's power branch.
Although Neeson's original application called for 15 new electrical pumps, WPB engineers have signified that they are in favor of patching up equipment now in use to a point that will carry Philadelphia through the war.

In the light of its inability to supply the new pumps for which Neeson first applied, WPB requested him to furnish an alternate estimate of just what Philadelphia must have in the way of material and parts to put its failing pumps back on line.
Gorman indicated that no help could be given the city until Neeson conformed with the requirements of the WPB.

The \$18,000,000 rehabilitation program which had been planned for Philadelphia's water system is now being considered as necessary shelved for the duration of the war, the 15 new electrical pumps which were to have been a part of it having been tentatively allocated by WPB to other communities.

WPB RESUMES CHECKUP TO BETTER WATER HERE

The WPB began a reinspection of Philadelphia's water-works yesterday preparatory to a final determination of what rehabilitation work will be permitted.
Arthur E. Gorman, chief of the water section of WPB's power branch, conferred with Director of Public Works John H. Neeson and Seth Van Loan, chief in charge of construction on the city's 100,000 waterworks water treatment plant, and other chlorinating plants. Neeson's statement, effective December 15, will determine the city's study today.

Malone Upsets Cart

Meanwhile, Director of Public Safety James H. Malone struck another blow at the "magic formula" when he objected to a plan to short-change the police and fire payrolls.
Egan proposed to take \$280,000 out of the police payroll and \$160,000 out of the firemen's item, to offset "turnover" in personnel. Recurring vacancies, suspensions and other "turnover" in the police force, Malone said he "like to go along with City Council because you've always gone along with me."
"You have to save money," he said, "I'll try to help, but if you reduce these appropriations that much I'll have to keep a chain of many vacancies. I'd suggest a safe turnover allowance of \$150,000 in the police item and \$100,000 in the firemen's item."
Surplus Into Deficit.
That means further reduction of \$180,000 in Council's "surplus" and turned the \$42,041 "surplus" into a \$147,959 deficit.
It may grow into a \$447,959 deficit unless some of the WPB "is" be retrieved.
William M. Hol observed, "That makes an in our boot."

"MAGIC FORMULA" TO CUT WAGE TAX

TO CUT WAGE TAX TO SNAGS

'Surplus' Becomes Deficit and May Hold Up 1943 Budget.

By LEEDS MOBERLEY
The Republican Organization's "magic formula" for cutting the 1½ percent wage tax to 1 percent ran into difficulties yesterday. The resulting mixup threatened to delay enactment of the 1943 city-county budget beyond the December 15 deadline for the first time in four years.

Everything seemed to go wrong when City Council, sitting as Committee of the Whole, started to hark at assorted items to effect the "magic formula" necessary for a one-third reduction in the wage tax.

Margin Apparent
Cuts originally planned came to \$1,640,000, enough to bring the budget into balance with anticipated income, with \$192,041 to spare.
So nobody felt disturbed when City Council, sitting as Committee of the Whole, started to hark at assorted items to effect the "magic formula" necessary for a one-third reduction in the wage tax.

That cut the planned budget surplus into a Fund Card and the trouble began.
Snag on WPA Funds.
The program as set forth by Councilman L. Wallace Egan, GOP organization chairman, called for transfer of \$300,000 from the unexpended balance of the city's WPA funds. Egan said the balance was about \$650,000. Neeson said his latest information was that all but \$600 was allocated to specific projects.
Appalled, the Councilmen hurriedly ordered William H. Controller's office and ascertained that although there was an unexpended balance of \$384,000, most of that was committed.

So Neeson was told to find out how much of the encumbered funds could be freed up by the end of Thursday morning—which means the clerical and printing work on the finished budget performance may be held up so long it will be impossible to complete "settlement" by December 15.

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Another Headache

The budget, \$88,359,187.76 in total form, may be thrown further out of line by the water system program. Neeson reported that the WPB finally decided the \$18,000,000 modernization program must wait until the end of the war. \$66,887 will be required for repairs to the present equipment.

He also asked \$250,000 to clean up the Torresdale sedimentation basin, which—having been neglected for 37 years—has accumulated so much silt that its capacity is reduced by 30 percent.
Councilmen put off action items in those cases that something would turn up.

Pay Increases Voted.
Pay increases were voted to city and county employees—not only the \$2500-a-year-and-over group who received bonuses this year—but also those turning up to \$4989. Furthermore, it was decided to drop the bonus system entirely and incorporate all increases in the basic wage rates.

Under this setup the \$700 to \$800 pay bracket—comprising all but a comparative handful of the approximately 20,000 municipal workers—is increased \$400 a year.
The base pay of policemen and firemen goes up from the present \$2190 to \$2590 a year.
The new schedule of increases, which cost \$3,837,000 in addition to this year's increases: \$22,000,000.

Up to \$200,000
\$ 500 to \$ 600 \$200
\$ 600 to \$ 700 \$200
\$ 700 to \$ 800 \$200
\$ 800 to \$ 900 \$300
\$ 900 to \$ 1,000 \$400
\$ 1,000 to \$ 1,200 \$500
\$ 1,200 to \$ 1,400 \$600
\$ 1,400 to \$ 1,600 \$700
\$ 1,600 to \$ 1,800 \$800
\$ 1,800 to \$ 2,000 \$900
\$ 2,000 to \$ 2,500 \$1,000
\$ 2,500 to \$ 3,000 \$1,100
\$ 3,000 to \$ 3,500 \$1,200
\$ 3,500 to \$ 4,000 \$1,300
\$ 4,000 to \$ 4,500 \$1,400
\$ 4,500 to \$ 4,989 \$1,500

Council began its day's deliberations by cutting \$150,000 off the \$700,000 tentative appropriation for the Municipal Pension Fund Board, in anticipation that employees' payments would rise.
Council's job is to fit the budget to anticipated 1943 receipts that shrink to \$81,816,388.96 by the one-third cut in the wage tax.

That takes into account Receiver of Taxes David W. Harris' revised, super-optimistic estimates. The budget after all the cuts made yesterday, amounts to \$88,359,187.76. The gaps will be narrowed by the \$4,744,839.77 estimated surplus, plus \$600,000 in merging bond issues. The \$1,000,000 in pending projects of assorted items after December 31, and whatever "surpluses" and "economies" Council can find.

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PLANS TO REINSPECT WATER PLANT

WPB Official Arrives Today to Discuss Need of Repair Parts

Revised Washington Bureau
WASHINGTON, Dec. 8.—Arthur E. Gorman, chief of the War Production Board's water section, will be in Philadelphia tomorrow for a further inspection of the city's water system.

Herbert S. Marks, director of the WPB power division (which includes the water section), announced today Gorman would give particular attention to the chlorinating plants to ascertain what repairs may be required to keep them functioning for the duration of the war.

Wants More Information.
Gorman also will inspect pumping stations to gather additional information on priority requirements. Marks, Director of Public Works John H. Neeson has answered WPB's request for additional information on the need for new pumping stations, but the information was incomplete.

Neeson's request for the release of 15 new pumps already on order is still before the WPB, but officials have let it be known that no more than two of them will be authorized. The others will be diverted to localities where the need is considered by WPB to be even greater.

Will OK Repair Parts.
However, WPB undoubtedly will grant priorities for materials necessary to rehabilitate the present equipment. Neeson has agreed to keep it in good repair from now on.

Marks, who has the final say on approved, said he believed Gorman's personal inspection would "clear the air" and that a decision could be expected by the end of the week.

The Committee of Seventy protested yesterday against the plan to dip into the \$18,000,000 war loan for emergency repairs deferred until the system is in operation in a wartime program.

Percy H. Clark, chairman of the Seventy's committee on finances, urged that the Federal Reserve Board be asked to purchase \$2,000,000 of War Production Board bonds, which would be used to finance the program in full until after the war, is to tap the loan fund for about \$500,000.

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