

# THE CONCRETE HERALD

Formerly the Hamilton Herald Established Nov. 23, 1901. Oldest Paper in the Upper Skagit.

## CITY LIGHT FACING CHOICE OF NEW DAMS

Delays in the construction work at the Gorge Dam above Newhalem is causing City Light a lot of headaches these days. Faced with a need for additional power to handle the requirements of the expansion of Bethlemen Steel in Seattle, the power officials are desperately trying to work out a quick solution to problems facing the expansion of generating facilities on the upper Skagit.

The Gorge dam job is now a year behind schedule, due to the difficulty in solving a "leak" underground at the Gorge site. An attempt was made to freeze the breach with an ice curtain, but up to the present time no lasting success has been achieved. As a result of the difficulty, the contractors, Merritt, Chapman & Scott Corp. and the Savin Construction Corp. contend that they are losing money and are calling for adjustment of their contract.

In the meantime the Bureau of Reclamation has joined the City Light in trying out another process, grouting the leaking area with cement. It is not known yet whether this will work or not.

### Thunder Creek Speeded

Long range plans call for use of Thunder Creek as a storage reservoir by use of a new dam. The present problems are now being slanted toward early completion of some sort of project on this stream.

At present Thunder Creek flows into Diablo lake and is used for power there and at Gorge. Three alternate plans have been proposed for better use of the flow.

No. 1 is to dam the stream, tunnel through the mountain and let the water go into Ross lake for extra power all the way down to Newhalem.

No. 2 is to put a complete generating plant on Thunder Creek and continue to spill water into Diablo lake.

No. 3 is to dam Thunder and divert the water direct to Newhalem by tunnel. This would give a tremendous "head" of power at Newhalem that would produce a gain of about 60,000 kilowatts over that obtained from just using the flow in normal generation at Ross, Diablo and Gorge.

Diverting the water to Ross lake by way of tunnels to Panther

Creek would permit use of the extra power in a year. The other plans would take longer, possibly up to 1960.

If the dam at Ross is raised another 125 feet, as projected, the present decisions must take this into consideration. As raising of Ross is up to Canada's decision of whether or not they will permit territory there to be flooded, the problem of future expansion on the upper Skagit is now a tangle of conflicting ideas.

The Seattle council and board of electric power are hoping to make some sort of a decision in the very near future. The decision will be of interest to the upper valley as in any case it will mean more construction work for the next few years.

FEBRUARY 7, 1957.