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\$120,000 Drainage Ditch Completed At Jerome Relocation Center Last Week

Evacuees at the Jerome Relocation Center and private contractors completed the centers new \$120,000 main drainage ditch last week. The canal will provide drainage for 38 square miles of the upper Boeuf River watershed in Chicot and Drew Counties. It is 11.4 miles in length and represents the moving of 800,000 yards of dirt.

Work on the lower section of the project which included clearing and widening two miles of the Boeuf River channel, beginning at a point one-half mile south of Highway 82, was started November 10, 1942.

Clearing of the right-of-way, most of which ran through wooded sections, was done by evacuee residents of the center. Actual excavating was done by contract.

The old channel of the river was widened to a bed of 70 feet. The lower end of the ditch proper is 28 feet wide at the bottom, 70 feet at the top and 10 feet deep. Completion of the big ditch will provide an outlet for water from the entire 10,000-acre tract leased to the War Relocation Authority at the present time. In spite of inadequate drainage, much of this land was cultivated by evacuees this year.

The complete drainage system includes 70 miles of smaller lateral ditches, 40 of which have been completed. Value of the land prior to the drainage work was \$5 to \$10 per acre. The same land, now that it can be drained, is valued at \$30 an acre.

Increased value of the affected land will be for greater than the total cost of excavating and clearing when the complete system is in operation, officials have said.

Center administrators are high in praise of the work done by the evacuees in clearing the right-of-ways. Their work included felling the timber and pushing it aside with bulldozers. In order to stay ahead of the draglines, it was often necessary for crews to work through rain and mud and cold during the winter, and through intense heat in the summer. What amounted to a poison ivy and chigger epidemic was added to the grief suffered during the summer months.

Last August, Congressmen Oren Harris of the Seventh district and W. F. Norrell of the Sixth district inspected the center and made a joint statement to the effect that they were surprised and pleased to see the progress being made in the drainage work and the resulting increase in farming land values.

The congressmen added that they could "foresee the day when the camp area would be divided into 60-acre tracts and become the homes of prosperous Arkansas farmers."

Center administrators have reported successful farming operations during the past season. The comparatively few acres suitable for production last spring have yielded more than enough root and green vegetables for Center consumption, and the supply will be sufficient for the next six or eight weeks. Surpluses have been shipped to other relocation centers and to army posts.

—DN—

EXPRESS THANKS TO THOSE

President Gets New Bill To Ban Father Draft

Paul V. McNutt was described yesterday as "so steamed up" that he will quit as manpower commissioner unless President Roosevelt vetoes the new father draft act.

The bill sent to the White House by the Senate on a voice vote Tuesday strips McNutt of authority over Selective Service. It also is designed to slow down or halt the draft of pre-war fathers but officials indicated it would not bring about any radical changes in present induction procedures.

McNutt formally told the Senate that the legislation sabotaged 'sound administration.'

One senator declared he had heard the manpower chief was "so steamed up about this that he has indicated he would resign if the president signs the bill."

McNutt declared in his letter to the Senate the bill would "seriously weaken the manpower program" by divorcing military and civilian manpower authority.

Sabotage, Cries McNutt

"The proposed amendment . . . is a sabotage of sound administration," he wrote.

McNutt said Director Lewis B. Hershey of Selective Service had recommended the list of "non-deferrable" jobs from which men were inducted without regard to family dependencies. He added "the opposition has been engaged in creating a public impression that the non-deferrable list was 'imposed' up Selective Service by the War Manpower Commission or by me personally."

Nullifies Work-or-Fight Order

This so-called "work or fight" order of the WMC would be nullified by the bill, which also provides:

That fathers of children born before Sept. 15, 1942, shall not be drafted until all available single men in the country have been inducted. This "national pool" plan was regarded by Senator Johnson (Dem., Colo. as likely to postpone the drafting of some fathers for two or three months. An "escape" clause provides that the induction plan shall not be allowed to interfere with the "orderly flow" of manpower to the armed forces."

That a five-member medical commission shall review physical and mental standards of the services to determine if they can be lowered with a view to bringing more 4F's into uniform.

—DN—

Rams Drop Game To Hillbillies Friday

The Dermott Rams were beaten by the Monticello Hillbillies 39-7 on the sportsmen field Friday night. The Hillbillies marched down the field on the kick-off, and after a few downs they took the pigskin across the goal. The Rams pulled themselves together in the second quarter and ran a touchdown over the Hillbillies. Lowry took it across on a plunge through the line. The extra point was made

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