

Catching Up After Rain

Flood Control Project Picks Up Steam

By John Wheeler

Apparently more kindly deities have replaced whatever gods which have harried and hounded Granite Construction company on its corps of engineers' project to wall in the San Lorenzo river.

After rain and high river runoff spiked delays totalling more than a month to the project, Granite officials now quietly predict the whole project, originally slated to wind up in mid-1959 may be largely completed before the advent of this year's rainy season giving the city partial protection ahead of schedule.

In an interview with Knute Hansston, projects engineer for the army corps of engineers, and Ed Spaith, Granite's project superintendent, the flood control project shapes up something like this:

Levees on both banks of the river to the Riverside avenue bridge are tentatively planned to be completed by Thanksgiving. Roadways and planting of the levees may be done the following year.

More than 75 per cent of all clearing of river and Branciforte creek banks is completed. For a period, crews were muscling up 13,000 to 14,000 cubic yards of dirt per day, but the pace has slowed somewhat pending a minor bit of problem-solving with utility relocations. Above the Water street bridge to the business district by-pass bridge, more than 66 per cent of levee construction is completed as far as dirt moving is concerned. The river-face of the levee will be studded with rip rap (odd-shaped chunks of quarried rock) until the earthen mound appears to have a critical case of small pox.

According to Granite's contract with the corps of engineers, work along the right bank (facing downstream) between the business district by-pass and Soquel avenue bridges have top priority during this year. However, Granite's piping "cats" (a whistle sounds whenever the tractor goes into reverse as a safety measure) have ranged the length of Branciforte creek and to the Riverside avenue bridge along the river.

Spaith said his crews may begin clearing and grubbing but no excavation along Branciforte creek next week. The concrete walls which will sheathe the creek's water should be poured beginning in July.

One of Granite's neatest tricks for sidewalk engineers will be performed the first of next month. A towering portable dredge will be trucked in and unloaded at the business district by-pass bridge.

A hole will be torn in the river with drag lines where the dredge can be floated. Then it will begin "eating" its way to the

river's mouth at the rate of about 500 cubic yards a day. Silt or fill will be pumped from the river's bottom through a flexible pipe into San Lorenzo park redevelopment project where storage areas are being prepared. Land in the redevelopment project, once the subject of repeated drenchings by flood waters, will be built up over the 20-foot mark behind the levees where it will not only be safe from the river, but will drain storm water into Ocean street.

As the dredge works its way south, it will leave behind it a re-shaped river channel, generally trapezoid with three to one slopes. The river bottom will vary in width from 100 feet above the freeway bridge

to 200 feet at the river's mouth. Levee highth will similarly vary from 25 feet to 20 feet.

Water can be as much a problem behind levees as in front during winter deluges if proper engineering is ignored. Santa Cruz' project will have an intricate and high-rate collection system for picking up water draining from the city toward the river. It will be pumped up and over the levees and into the river.

Branciforte creek, which will soon be attired in concrete from the river about 1½ miles upstream, will sport a bottom slab containing a special depression along the center line to provide a fish channel during periods when the creek dries to a trickle.

Controversy Hits Home Stretch

Supervisors Hold Hearing On Dr. Robins Tomorrow

By Norman Indahl

The startling, long drawn out controversy over the firing and suspension of Dr. Harvey Robins, county hospital administrator, is expected to come to a head at a closed meeting of the board of supervisors tomorrow afternoon.

Dr. Robins, summarily fired April 17 by Board Chairman Francis Silliman and later rehired and suspended, will be confronted with witnesses who provide the basis for the strong charges of unprofessional conduct and poor administration which have been leveled against him.

The hearing opens at 3 o'clock in the board of supervisors chambers.

For the first time Attorney J. Frank Murphy, counsel for the suspended medical chief, will have an opportunity to refute the charges. Immediately after Silliman released a long list of charges supporting the main charges of maladministration and unprofessional conduct, Murphy stated the charges could easily be refuted.

Silliman said he was extremely "shocked" when Murphy came in at noon Wednesday with the request to postpone the open hearing scheduled for the city council chambers last Friday morning. The attorney also sought and received permission to have the board hearing closed to the public since it dealt with "personal matters."

Murphy stated the request for a delay was made so he can make a further investigation into the charges brought against Dr. Robins and check out the testimony of witnesses.

Names and witnesses supporting the charges of vulgar and obscene remarks and improper advances made against Dr. Robins have been orally submitted to Murphy.

Silliman, taking the stand the county has a "very good case," said the Dr. Robins' camp rec-

said he does not know how many witnesses he plans to bring forth at the hearing to refute the charges.

A \$150 per day administrative survey of the hospital is being conducted by the Louis Kroeger and associates firm because the board chairman said he received "professional" testimony that the county hospital is in danger of accreditation.

The preliminary report from the Kroeger firm will be used in the hearing, with more complete details to follow later, according to the chairman.

In order to bring the issue to a finish, the board plans to remain in session until the hearing is finished. The board is expected to conclude the matter — if everything goes well — by midnight.

Dr. Robins was suspended by the board pending the outcome of the hearing tomorrow. Serving as temporary hospital director is Dr. John Fuller.

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Camera Catches Scars Of Progress



An eye in the sky looks north of the Water street bridge to survey Granite Construction company's progress

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with their corps of engineers' contract to install levees and flood protection along the San Lorenzo river. Crews and equipment have ranged over most of

the river's banks and Branciforte creek as they make up time lost during the recent winter deluge.

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