

ACTUAL WORK BEGINS ON THE HOOVER DAM

Taming of Turbulent Colorado River Is Goal of Builders.

CREWS CALLED ON JOB

First Work Will Be to Clear Right
Of Way for Rail Line to
Dam Site.

Las Vegas, Nevada, March 12 (AP)—The taming of the mighty Colorado river got under way today. Actual work started on Hoover dam, a monumental engineering effort, fittingly placed in a wild section that has been a land of romance since the Sixteenth century.

The turbulent stream which draws its volume from seven states before emptying into the Gulf of California, has been the object of study by government engineers more than 40 years.

Out of 40 years of study and 10 years of fighting came the Swing-Johnson bill, providing for an expenditure of \$165,000,000 for the great dam project, but even as the "hard rock" crews went on the job today the fight was still on in Washington.

Arizona, dissatisfied with provisions of the Swing-Johnson bill, filed suit in the United States supreme court to prevent its consummation on the ground that it discriminated against the state.

Case Is Still Pending.

Waving aside Arizona's opposition, the six remaining states of the Colorado river basin entered a compact under which the development now proceeds. The supreme court case still is pending.

When Secretary Wilbur of the interior department Wednesday accepted the bid of the Six Companies, Inc., of San Francisco for construction of the dam for slightly less than \$50,000,000, officials in charge announced work would start immediately.

Skeleton crews were called on the job to clear a right of way for a rail line that will carry supplies to the dam site.

Four hundred years ago gold-seeking Spanish explorers entered the southwest. Later Mormons came down the Colorado, found rich mineral deposits and established colonies. But it remained for engineers to discover the real treasure house of the west, locked up in the Colorado river.

Transformed a Desert.

A great desert, once the Salton sea, was reclaimed near the delta of the Colorado. This now is the Imperial valley of California, from whose two thousand square miles early fruits and vegetables speed by express to all parts of the United States.

But like a whimsical giant, the 1,700 mile river of sand and water continuously threatened to turn the rich valley back into the sea. More than seven million dollars have been spent on levees and flood protection. Each day the Colorado builds up its bed, high above the Imperial valley, depositing enough sediment each year to cover a hundred thousand acres a foot deep.

Imperial valley leaders, faced continuously with annihilation by the flood menace, were joined by thirsty, fast growing southern California cities which sought the water for irrigation and domestic use.

Now diamond drills and explosives are ready to bite into the mile-high walls of Boulder canyon.