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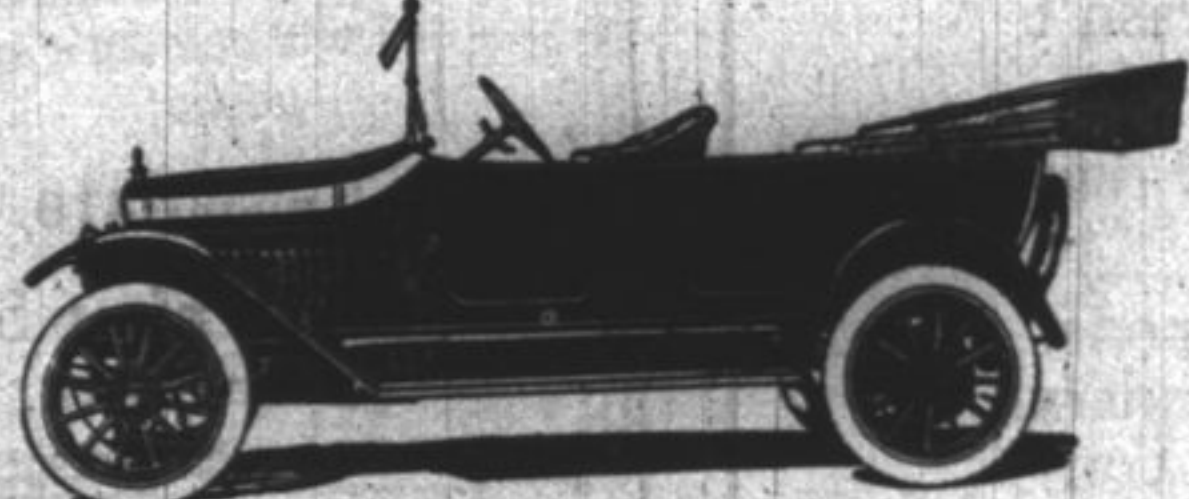
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PINCHOT ASKED TO DEFINE HIS POSITION

Answers Demanded to List of Pertinent Questions

Gifford Pinchot, former chief forester and for several years accepted authority on conservation questions, has been challenged by the Water Power Development Association to define his position as to water power legislation and to explain to the country why he is opposed to pending legislation to encourage the development and use of water powers. In an open letter addressed to the Pennsylvania Bill Moore, signed by Harry W. Hand, chairman of its executive committee, the Development association, an organization of manufacturers of water wheels and hydraulic and electrical equipment and supplies, challenges Mr. Pinchot to be specific in his charges that certain bills in congress are in the interests of water power monopolies and to produce proof that there is, as he has alleged, a powerful lobby at work in Washington to pass these bills.

The letter is as follows:
"You have charged President Wilson and a majority of the members of the United States senate with having failed to defend public rights in permitting the passage of the Shields bill authorizing water power development on navigable streams.

"This association holds no brief for any particular bill and is anxious only for legislation that will stimulate new industries and national prosperity through development and use of water powers now flowing to waste. We believe the Shields bill to be such a measure. We believe that it offers terms to capital which will encourage investment in water power development. We believe that the indorsement of this bill by former Secretary of War Garrison and by the senate committee and the fact that among the senators who voted for its passage after four weeks of exhaustive debate were representatives of the Democratic, Republican and Progressive parties, while only twenty-two votes could be mustered against it, is evidence that the bill gives full consideration and protection to all public rights and interests.

"You have written and talked much about a water power trust. Do not all students of economic conditions agree that the power business is a natural monopoly and that there cannot be economic competition in the distribution of electric current in any given locality?

"You have complained that the Shields bill proposes to give away water powers without compensation. This, of course, ignores the big fact that a large part of the expenditures in construction of any dam and power plant must go for improving navigation and that this public benefit is to be rendered without cost to the government. Without raising this argument, however, why do you want a charge made by the government for use of water power?

"We want to see the water powers of the United States developed and used. Do you?

"Is it not a fact that under the kind of restriction and high rentals in the present laws, approved by you, development has come practically to a standstill and no large powers have been or are being developed in the national forests and the public domain?

"Is it not true that under the present general dam laws, which do not offer terms attractive to capital, only eight dams and water power plants, with a total development of less than 140,000 horsepower, have been built on navigable streams in the last ten years?

"Is it not a fact that in this same period water powers in Europe have had the greatest era of development known to history?

"Do you not know that under the restrictive policies of the United States for ten years past not a single electrochemical plant using water power has been built in this country, while in the same years Europe has developed more than a million horsepower of hydroelectricity devoted to fixation of atmospheric nitrogen alone?

"Are you aware that restrictive laws and water power failures in this country have so discouraged investment that some of our largest power enterprises of recent years have had to be financed abroad?

"Is it not true that, excepting in the cases of a few of our largest and most attractive powers, the margin of competition is very close between water power and cheapened cost and increased efficiency of steam plants?

"Do you not know that very cheap power is essential to the establishment of the electrochemical, electrometallurgical and other new processes and industries necessary in this country to enable us to keep abreast of the industrial and agricultural progress of other countries?

"Is it not true that every kilowatt of electricity produced by water power is the approximate equivalent of two pounds of coal saved for future consumption?

"Are you not aware that every dollar, every cent added to the cost of water power development adds to the cost of supplying power to the consumer, decreases the possibilities of production of power cheap enough upon which to build great new industries, lessens the margin of economy between generating power by water and by steam and diminishes the number of water powers that can be economically and profitably developed, in like manner the extent diminishing

the hope of conserving the fuel supply?

"If you are aware of these facts why should you want to hamper and retard water power development by adding rentals, taxes or any other items unnecessarily to its cost?

"You and your friends have told the country that a great and powerful lobby is at work in Washington to influence water power legislation, with the implication that this influence is improper. Will you, for our information and that of the public, identify this lobby, say who composes it, what interests it represents and show any improper or vicious efforts on its part to influence legislation?

"You have declared that in taking over power plants that might be built under the provisions of the Shields bill the government would be required to pay for an unearned increment in lands taken by power of condemnation granted under the act. As a matter of fact and of law, are you not mistaken in this declaration?

"You charge that the bill does not protect public rights because at the end of fifty years, in buying the plants, the government would be compelled to take over transmission and distributing systems dependent upon the water powers for their value. Would you have the government discourage investment in such utilities by proposing to destroy the value of these properties at the end of fifty years? If the government did buy the generating plant and not the distributing system, what would you propose it might do with the power? You may say that the whole cost of the plant should be amortized and the property turned over to the government free of cost at the end of the period. If so, do you not know that the amortization cost would have to be added to power prices and would operate to discourage water power development in the same manner and for the same reasons as would be the imposition of any other form of rental or taxation adding unnecessarily to the cost of power? Also, why should the present and the next generations be asked, during the pioneer stage of the enterprise, to build and pay for a plant in order that future generations might be given the property free of cost and so allowed to enjoy cheaper power?

"We consider use to be the highest form of conservation of water power. The senate seems to agree with this belief. Are you of the same opinion? If not, why not? If so, do you not agree that legislation which will encourage and stimulate maximum development and use is the most desirable form of water power legislation?

"You seem to see an impropriety in the fact that hydraulic engineers and water power men—men who know the water power business—have been consulted by congress about this legislation. Whom would you consult to obtain the facts? If you were going to build a house, would you employ an architect or a poet to draw the plans?

"Since the sole aim and purpose of this association is to give the widest publicity possible to all the facts concerning water powers, in the hope that such publicity will bring about enlightened public sentiment in favor of legislation that will result in their development and use, we are giving this letter to the press and invite you to do the same with your reply to these questions."

NEW LAWS NEEDED TO GIVE JOBS TO JOBLESS MEN.

It is estimated that fully 30,000 engineers are more or less affected by the stagnation which for three years has existed in water power development. Up to three years ago plants under construction, begun before the operation of the new laws had put a stop to planning new enterprises, gave work to these engineers and to hundreds of thousands of skilled and unskilled workmen. Today engineers of long experience are haunting the offices of power companies and contractors begging for jobs.

One capable engineer recently announced that he had written 1,500 letters asking for employment without receiving an offer. Pages of advertisements of "Positions Wanted" appear regularly in engineering papers, while there are practically no "Help Wanted" advertisements. One manufacturing plant in Philadelphia with \$2,000,000 invested in buildings and machinery for the building of water wheels was shut down for ten months last year and this year has had only one order for one small wheel.

Power a National Need.

The public needs both steam power and water power. It is to the interest of the whole country that our water power should be developed as rapidly and as efficiently as possible. This development can be carried on only in one of two ways—either by government ownership and operation or by the employment of capital worked under the incentive of private property. Nobody but a visionary proposes today that the government should build and operate water power plants. Some system must, therefore, be devised for the development of water powers as a natural resource by private genius and private capital.—Outlook

True Meaning of Conservation.

I believe that conservation in its broadest term means not the mere saving of a resource against the possible future need, but making of the conserved resource as widely useful to the greatest possible number in the shortest time consistent with the elimination of waste.—Professor Thomas H. Norton, Ph. D., Sc. D., Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, United States Department of Commerce, in Scientific American.

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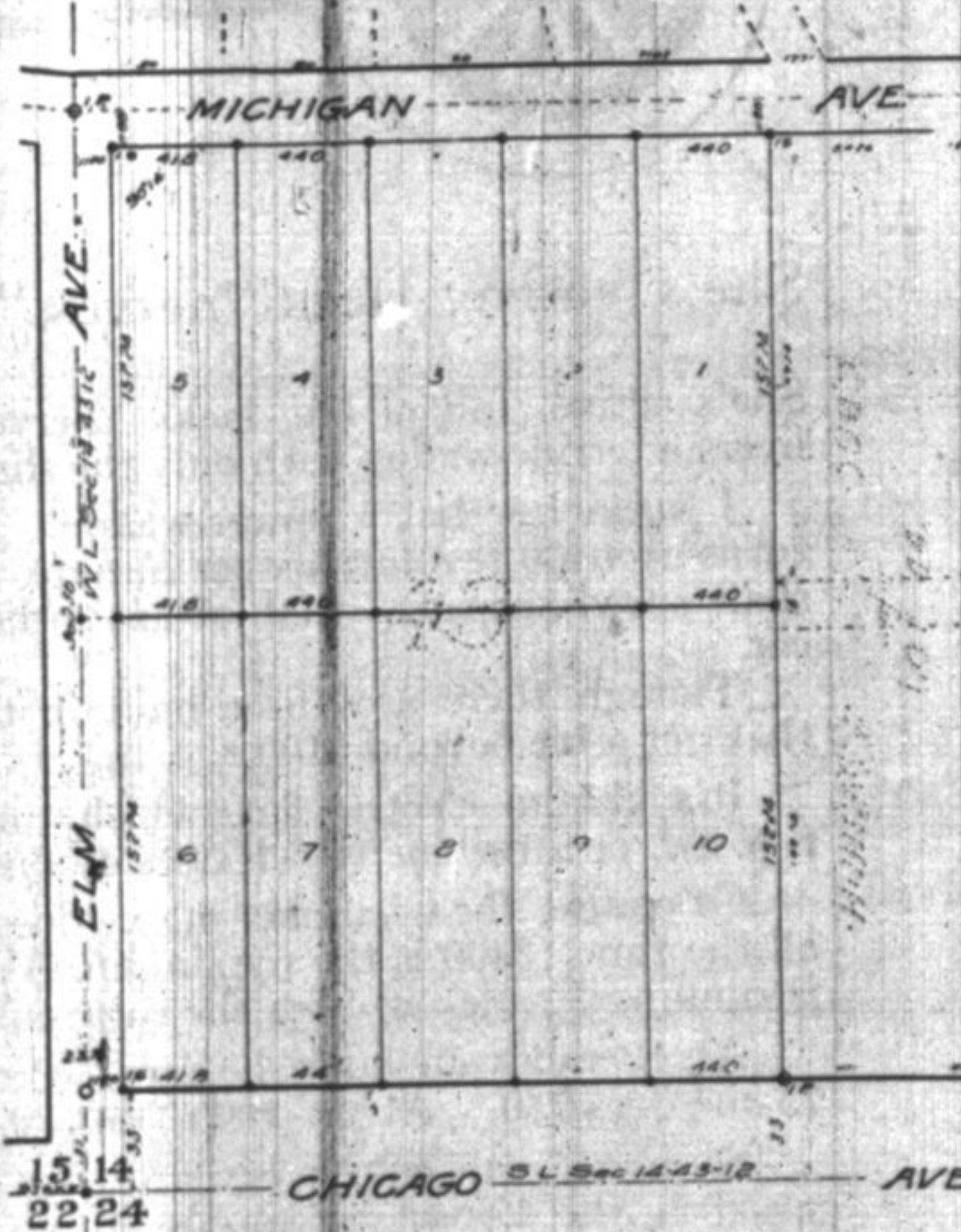


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