

**WAR EXPENDITURES: HEARINGS,  
SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS, 1ST  
SESSION; SERIAL 2 - PART 37 PP.  
3265-3341**

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by Various

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# WAR EXPENDITURES

## HEARINGS

BEFORE

SUBCOMMITTEE No. 1

(AVIATION)

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EXPENDITURES  
IN THE WAR DEPARTMENT

*U.S. Congress*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS  
FIRST SESSION

ON

WAR EXPENDITURES

HON. JAMES A. FREAR, *Chairman*  
HON. WALTER W. MAGEE    HON. CLARENCE F. LEA

Serial 2--Part 37



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*Mr. [unclear]*

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ii

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## WAR EXPENDITURES.

SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 1 (AVIATION)  
OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
EXPENDITURES IN THE WAR DEPARTMENT,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, D. C., November 7, 1919.

The subcommittee met at 10 o'clock a. m. on call of the chairman, Hon. James A. Frear (chairman) presiding.  
Also present: Hon. Walter W. Magee and Hon. Clarence F. Lea.

### TESTIMONY OF MR. WILLIAM A. WELCH, HAVERSTRAW, N. Y.

The witness was duly sworn by Mr. Frear.

Mr. FREAR. Mr. Welch, will you please give you name and address to the reporter?

Mr. WELCH. William A. Welch; Haverstraw, N. Y.

Mr. FREAR. How long have you lived there?

Mr. WELCH. Six years.

Mr. FREAR. Were you engaged in the spruce production business; if so, in what capacity and where?

Mr. WELCH. I was commissioned in May, 1918, and ordered to report to Portland, Oreg., to Gen. Disque, or Col. Disque, he was at that time, for duty with the Signal Corps.

Mr. FREAR. What was your business in private life?

Mr. WELCH. I am a civil engineer.

Mr. FREAR. What was your commission?

Mr. WELCH. I was appointed division engineer of the division and put in charge of construction work.

Mr. FREAR. No; what I mean is, what was your title?

Mr. WELCH. Division engineer.

Mr. FREAR. I mean your military title.

Mr. WELCH. I was a major, but at that time a captain.

Mr. FREAR. Who appointed you to the Spruce Production Division?

Mr. WELCH. The War Department assigned me there.

Mr. FREAR. At whose request?

Mr. WELCH. I do not know.

Mr. FREAR. At your own request?

Mr. WELCH. No, sir.

Mr. FREAR. Were you acquainted with any persons there?

Mr. WELCH. I knew none of them.

Am. R. 13, 37

Mr. FREAR. All right. Will you now go on and briefly state your connection with the service, and give any information you may have to give to the committee,

Mr. WELCH. Immediately after arriving there I made an inspection—

Mr. FREAR (interposing). What time was that?

Mr. WELCH. In June.

Mr. FREAR. 1918?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FREAR. Go ahead.

Mr. WELCH (continuing). Over all the proposed railroad projects of the division.

Mr. FREAR. Of what, the Spruce Production Division?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir. Also all the proposed sawmill sites that they were to erect.

Mr. FREAR. Had those projects been determined upon at that time, before you went out there?

Mr. WELCH. The Clallam road contract had been let when I reached there, and the engineers had been in the field for some time, and a good deal of it was located.

Mr. FREAR. What about the Yaquina Bay route to the Blodgett tract?

Mr. WELCH. The road to the south from Yaquina Bay down toward the Blodgett tract was nearly all located and construction was started on it.

Mr. FREAR. Contracts had been let?

Mr. WELCH. And contracts had been let. The one to the north had not been decided upon. They were debating as to whether to go on top of the ridge or watershed back from the ocean or to go along by the coast to get out the timber.

Mr. FREAR. No contract had been let for that at the time?

Mr. WELCH. The line had not been decided upon. I went over that line first—

Mr. FREAR (interposing). Which line?

Mr. WELCH. Both of them.

Mr. FREAR. You mean what by "both of them"?

Mr. WELCH. The ridge road and the one north from Yaquina Bay; the ridge road running north from Toledo and the line as constructed running through from Yaquina Bay.

Mr. FREAR. What you you mean by "the Ridge Road"?

Mr. WELCH. The line that had been surveyed and proposed to the division to run from Toledo, an extension of a little narrow-gauge road that ran out of Toledo.

Mr. FREAR. Do you mean the old Miller Road as it is called?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir; the old Miller Road, so-called.

Mr. FREAR. Wasn't there a survey leading along the top of the ridge or divide which was near the coast, but not the coast line?

Mr. WELCH. Well, that is the one I mean by the ridge road.

Mr. FREAR. This road from Toledo north must be 10 miles away from the coast.

Mr. WELCH. Further to the east; yes, sir.

Mr. FREAR. That is the one you have in mind?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir; that is the one I have in mind. It was to be an extension of the Toledo Road.



Mr. FREAR. Of Miller Road?

Mr. WELCH. From Yaquina Bay on the watershed and follow the watershed in the direction of Bulls Bag of the Siletz to the big bend of the Siletz. There was also a reconnaissance made north from the end of the Miller Road to the east of that ridge, with the idea of getting into the spruce in that same section, and down the Siletz River. I examined those surveys and the reports that were made on them, and went over that ridge road, and recommended that the road be constructed by the coast rather than by the ridge.

Mr. FREAR. Who did you recommend that to and on what did you make the recommendation?

Mr. WELCH. I made the recommendation to the commanding officer of the division, and because in my judgment the ridge road on top of that ridge would have necessitated having all the spurs that might be put off from it into the spruce with heavy grades against the loads. It would have been on the highest ground in the timber.

Mr. FREAR. What grade against the loads did you find from your investigation?

Mr. WELCH. The grades against the loads would have all been on the spurs. There was very little on the main road. There would have been some but it would have been necessary to work the grade up to stay on the ridge.

Mr. FREAR. The divide was on the west of what you would call this division ridge, wasn't it?

Mr. WELCH. It was between the valley of the stream that the Miller Road runs up and the Siletz River and the ocean.

Mr. FREAR. The divide would be west of that, wouldn't it?

Mr. WELCH. Well, west of that valley; yes, sir. Between that valley and the ocean.

Mr. FREAR. Your testimony is that the timber which was up along that divide would have had to be brought against the grade.

Mr. WELCH. The most of the timber was on the west of the divide, like this [indicating], the ocean being to the west here and the Siletz Valley and the Miller Creek Valley here [indicating] but I do not remember the name of that creek, but the creek that runs into Toledo Bay; the most of the spruce according to the cruises, was on the west of that slope.

Mr. FREAR. On the west of that slope?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FREAR. We have had about six or seven witnesses, including three cruisers, to the effect that there was 55,000,000 feet of spruce there on the east side, whereas there was about 150,000,000 feet, most of it, I think, unfit for airplane stuff, on the other side.

Mr. WELCH. How far to the north?

Mr. FREAR. Running up the Siletz Valley.

Mr. WELCH. My understanding, and my understanding from the reports of the cruisers, on which I based my recommendation, was that until you passed the big bend of the Siletz and got into the Jack Creek country, I think it is, there was only about 22,000,000 feet of airplane spruce on the east side of the divide.

Mr. FREAR. How many miles would that be from where the Miller Road would have had to be extended; the Miller Road ran up about 5 miles I think.

Mr. WELCH. My recollection is about 10 miles.

Mr. FREAR. That is, you would have had to go about 10 miles north to strike how much spruce?

Mr. WELCH. I do not know how much; I do not know that the cruisers segregated that. But the Miller Road, and to the summit, to the creek that runs into Toledo, and the Siletz River, there was about 22,000,000 feet of airplane spruce.

Mr. FREAR. Let me see if I understand: We would have had to extend the Miller road 10 miles to strike 22,000,000 feet of spruce.

Mr. WELCH. No, sir.

Mr. FREAR. Let us get that right, then.

Mr. WELCH. The Miller road itself, with the extension, would tap that. To get at the other big body of spruce, as I recall it, it would be necessary to go over that divide and down the Siletz Valley about 10 miles farther.

Mr. FREAR. What was your survey—and while we are on this subject I will say that I was unaware that it was to be taken up—but what did your surveys disclose would be the grades going over the divide on the Miller road going north?

Mr. WELCH. As I remember it it was only about 2 per cent. I am not positive about that. I have not looked at it for more than a year.

Mr. FREAR. That is true as we have it.

Mr. WELCH. But there was a further consideration in my mind when I made that recommendation, that the road if put out closer to the coast would tap all the timber on the west side of the divide if necessary; and if we had to go on and get all of the production we were told to get we would go up the creek to the east of Otter Rock Summit and down Jack Creek and tap a big body of spruce in the big bend of the Siletz, and that this road so located out there might have and would have some salvage value and some future use.

Mr. FREAR. That is because it might become a part, as it has been suggested to the committee—and I am inquiring of you now if that is so in regard to your idea of the salvage value—it might become a part of the Southern Pacific and have a value as a coast road?

Mr. WELCH. As a coast road; yes, sir; but not necessarily a part of the Southern Pacific.

Mr. FREAR. Well, that is the only road it could connect with.

Mr. WELCH. It is all that it does connect with.

Mr. MAGEE. It is nothing but an extension of the Southern Pacific.

Mr. WELCH. It connects with the Southern Pacific at Yaquina, or with a branch.

Mr. MAGEE. From Yaquina Bay?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FREAR. At Otter Rock the testimony was offered to us, and I am inquiring whether it was correct or not, to the effect that it would require a long tunnel if the road were projected beyond that point because of obstacles in the shape of a mountain or high elevation at Otter Rock; do you remember anything as to that?

Mr. WELCH. I remember very distinctly that we located a line over the top of Otter Rock with a grade under 3 per cent, and we did not need a tunnel to get over it, but we abandoned the idea of staying close to the coast and going over Otter Rock because we discovered this other pass to the northeast that took us over the divide and down into the valley of the Siletz on a better grade and a better line.

Mr. FREAR. How long were you in that vicinity before you determined upon the location of the road? I mean, what examination did you make; just tell the committee.

Mr. WELCH. I only spent two days actually in the field. The rest of my information I secured from men I sent into the field to make reconnaissances.

Mr. FREAR. What men did you send into that particular field?

Mr. WELCH. Capt. Harman—

Mr. FREAR (interposing). Was he a logger or a cruiser?

Mr. WELCH. No, sir; he was an engineer. It was simply a railroad proposition.

Mr. FREAR. Well, I was referring to the amount of spruce there.

Mr. WELCH. No; I only depended upon the cruises as shown to me.

Mr. FREAR. By whom?

Mr. WELCH. By the division; by the records in the office.

Mr. FREAR. All right.

Mr. WELCH. And I sent a number of Capt. Harman's assistants.

Mr. FREAR. State to the committee about the situation in Clallam County, if you will.

Mr. WELCH. When I went over the Clallam County situation first in June, they were at work on the road in one or two places, a preliminary line had been run through, and the engineers were engaged in the final location. And they were getting supplies and material and men and camps into the country. I looked over that portion of the line which was located and over the portion west of Lake Crescent down to Lake Pleasant on the proposed location, and my first impression was that possibly from Lake Crescent west to the State highway it could be taken over and the road laid on that.

Mr. FREAR. About what distance north of the road as eventually laid out was that State highway?

Mr. WELCH. I do not—

Mr. FREAR (interposing). I do not think we have any testimony on that.

Mr. WELCH. It practically parallels it.

Mr. FREAR. For about what distance?

Mr. WELCH. From a mile to 3 or 4 miles. It is in the same valley.

Mr. FREAR. On the Soleduck River?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FREAR. Let me ask if a part of that road isn't on the other side of the mountain that separates the Soleduck River?

Mr. WELCH. No, sir; the highway and the road come into the valley of the Soleduck River at the same point.

Mr. FREAR. All the way from Lake Crescent to Lake Pleasant?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FREAR. You are positive of that?

Mr. WELCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FREAR. All right.

Mr. WELCH. The railroad crosses the Soleduck River twice. The highway does not cross it at all, but stays on the north side of the river all the way down.

Mr. FREAR. And how close to the river?

Mr. WELCH. At some points in sight of it and in some points 2 or 3 miles from it. But after I considered the cost of reconstruction of this highway and the taking up of rails from it, the difficulties