

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Look in awe at concrete achievements

HOOVER DAM, in Nevada and Arizona — First, the Colorado River had to be temporarily moved. And it was. Then, thousands of men working in three shifts around the clock every day (except Christmas and the Fourth of July, and paid \$4 a day — from which \$1.60 was subtracted for food, housing and transportation) — poured 4.4 million cubic yards of concrete, enough to pave a highway 16 feet wide from New York to San Francisco. They did this in less than four years, finishing two years ahead of schedule, 60 years ago this summer.



GEORGE

WILL

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BREATH-
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CANYON.

Let us now praise those who conceived and executed this still breathtaking marvel in the Black Canyon. And let us pause during this season of discontent with the federal government and all its works to consider what we have lost that the country had when it had a will for such great works.

The dam is named for the president who was an engineer and who encouraged the project. He was secretary of Commerce in 1922 when the Colorado River Compact allocated the river among the states it serves. Today half the population of the West is to some extent dependent on the river he helped sub-

side. The dam, says an inscription here, was "inspired by a vision of lonely lands made fruitful." Back then, even the Los Angeles basin was relatively lonely. Today Southern California and Arizona are the biggest users of the electric power generated here. Just down the road, there is a novel form of fruitfulness — the fastest growing city in the nation: Las Vegas, population 1 million. In 1935 its population was about 7,000.

Behind the dam — 660 feet thick at its base — is 110 miles of Lake Mead, enough water to cover Pennsylvania a foot deep. Construction of the dam cost the lives of 110 men, some of them victims of heat prostration in temperatures that often topped 125 degrees deep in the canyon. Flood control, irrigation, power generation, water storage — the dam serves many functions. But could it be built today?

Perhaps, if it did not unduly inconvenience some cousin of the small darter, and if all the impatient and racial set-asides could be negotiated before everyone decided the whole thing was too much trouble. But back then, before it was considered correct to be a conscientious objector to the "conquest" of nature, America had an appetite for big conquering projects.

As the dam was being completed trains were rolling west from Pittsburgh carrying steel beams for building banners that proclaimed "Bond for the Golden Gate Bridge," which was completed in

EDITORIALS



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AMA & ABA strip off old ways

In this, the Age of Advocacy, two longtime establishment professional organizations — the American Medical Association and the American Bar Association — have suddenly found their voices and, under new leadership, are becoming outspoken about specific public issues.

The AMA in the past has been noted for fretting about the malpractice insurance "crisis" that affects doctors, or 30 years ago, opposing Medicare as "socialized medicine" — and for bucking its views by ranking as the nation's No. 1 contributor to political campaigns. Over the years, the AMA's stances, and contributions, have been generally conservative.

When cigarette smoking came under fire and individual doctors were alarmed by tobacco use, the AMA as an organization was more nearly on the side of the tobacco companies, accepting millions of dollars from cigarette manufacturers to conduct inconclusive studies of the risks of smoking in the 1960s. Until very recently, the AMA was more vocal about bombing boxes than it was about controlling tobacco use.

In similar fashion, the ABA has had a reputation for being dominated by corporate lawyers and for being slightly stodgy and conservative. Its name usually came into view only when it offered an opinion about the suitability of Supreme Court candidates or when it circled the edges of issues like legal ethics or abortion. It was not until 1988 that the ABA adopted a resolution opposing barriers to "equal participation of women in the legal profession."

Well, what we see now is not your father's ABA or AMA.

The recently installed president of the ABA is Roberta Ramo of Albuquerque, a real estate lawyer who says she is determined to "protect and defend the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights."

Ramo defines that task in terms of defending against ill-advised constitutional amendments, using her bully pulpit to educate the American public. This isn't entire-

ly new. Under her predecessor, George Bushnell, the ABA had conducted a poll which showed that Americans favored an amendment to prohibit desecration of the American flag — but not when they discovered such an amendment would be the first ever to restrict freedom of speech and protest. Bushnell said, "The media must and can let the public know just how they are being manipulated and misled."

Ramo goes a step further. "We have become," she said recently, "a nation of constitutional illiterates, easily swayed by slogans, assailed by half-truths in what seems to be an endless stream of vituperative language, anger and hate...."

Amendments about prayer and flag-burning, she said, "will not stop the crises of teen pregnancy, youth crime, domestic violence — or raise SAT scores."

She is, obviously, quite right. We welcome her voice to the ranks of those calling for fewer bumper-stickerish changes in the Constitution and more focus on real problems.

The AMA, meanwhile, turned a corner when it published documents indicating the tobacco industry had known about but concealed tobacco's health dangers.

Dr. Lonnie Bristow, the AMA's new president, has put his organization squarely on the side of anti-smoking activists. Beyond calling for federal regulation of tobacco as an addictive drug, Bristow wants to educate Americans about how to fight teen-age tobacco use, including calling the police "if your 14-year-old daughter can buy a pack of cigarettes."

There's a lot we can do as individuals," he says.

And a lot of professional organizations like his and the ABA can do, bringing special expertise to the battlefield. They should speak out strongly on issues that affect the nation more than just affecting their members' wallets.

We're glad to see that they are doing just that.

Who had se buy a

There seemed to be about the sudden vacation cottage as buy a loaf of bread hours later with a co. No bread. Just a What's so odd about I drew quizzical. I descended the hill head hidden in the belly of the canoe balanced on its shoulders.

Actually, I was even thinking about the bread anyhow. Partly hidden inside the canoe, I was thinking of myself as a modern-day Trojan horse.

That fantasy was short-lived.

When you greet family expecting a loaf of bread and old get, let us put it milk.

My son gave my daughter smiled and so slightly in mock.

You were gone were buying something I knew that my father was familiar as to dull an.

My mouth had bread for days. Ear upon a roadside galling everything from fresh flowers. One home-made bread. I sweet Oatmeal, which it was the Andean canoe.

This Farmer's Market three days a week. Monday until Thursday. Problem is, farmers did. I guess picking and baking. So here I was, in a near buying frenzy.

Just up the road, a sells a liquid soap. Peppermint 18-1 P.

This stuff is the You can bathe, brush your hair and clean with it. It also made reading because the quotes from Shakespeare some hints about certain things.

Bronner's would stay but when I got to the switched from the brain to the canoe that shiny, 14-foot gal had passed as I came.

How much is it holding up the soap The clerk put my salespeople should tomer with zero sales pocket full of credit.

She acted as if it to be looking at soap of a canoe — even it is almost 100 to 1. "Why, I think I'll claim it. And I'll be."

Next thing I knew with the nose of a canoe from windshield.

At home, I tried how the market was canoe instead. As I