

# OIL SCANDAL REVERTS TO ROOSEVELT-TAFT SPLIT

By MARK SULLIVAN.

Washington, Feb. 9.—To understand this oil scandal, it is essential to know the background; and that background is included in the word conservation.

Up to somewhere between 1900 and 1910, this country had a national policy about public lands and the mineral oil and other resources in the public lands. That policy was to get the public lands as rapidly as possible out of the hands of the government and into the hands of private owners who would develop them.

It was a policy that arose when our public lands seemed inexhaustible. About the only concern of the government was to preserve order and equity among the individual pioneers. That the government should have any interest in holding on to the lands for itself was never thought of.

But somewhere about 1900, we began to reach the end of free or practically free public lands. Most of the really good farm lands had been taken up. It came to us as a disquieting realization. Almost overnight, the public attitude ceased to be one of encouraging individuals and corporations to take up the land, and became one of stern resistance even against claimants of the land under the old policy.

In this swift reversal of policy there were many tragedies. Men and corporations who had been proceeding in good faith under the spirit of the former policy, were suddenly compelled to fight for the rights they thought they had.

The first change came in the matter of forests. The man who at that time had charge of the national forests was Gifford Pinchot, now governor of Pennsylvania. Pinchot knew forestry and forests as probably no other American.

To his expert attention came the observation that rich as we seemed to be in forests, the actual fact was that we were using our forests faster than they were reproducing themselves.

Roosevelt Joins Move. Pinchot took his mood of alarm to Roosevelt. Roosevelt was infected by it, seized it, and shared it. With his gift for slogans he made "conservation" a political battle cry. Into every department of his administration that had to do with public lands and resources he injected the spirit of a swift about-face policy.

The Interior department and the Department of Agriculture became vigilant, not to pass out the government's land to claimants, but to safeguard it. Great areas of public land were withdrawn from inquiry. Claimants who were in process of perfecting title found those claims sternly scrutinized and many were rejected.

The Department of Justice began to prosecute cases of what formerly would have been regarded as harmless defects of formality, but under the new regime were looked upon as crimes and prosecuted as such.

By the time the Roosevelt administration was ended, the reversal of policy had become complete. Certainly it had become complete as regards the great bulk of the voters in the more settled east. In the west, where the remaining lands were, there still continued to be a good deal of the old spirit which regarded rapid development the more desirable policy.

als who had old rights or wanted to acquire new rights to land, oil, minerals or forests within the national domain became one of minute delicacy. Whoever represented the government in the transaction was held to strict accountability. Any laxity held the menace of scandal.

The Wilson administration continued the Roosevelt policy. Franklin K. Lane, who was secretary of the Interior under Wilson, was a Californian;

but he had spent many years in Washington and was an admirer of Roosevelt. His practice about the public lands under his control was perhaps a little less rigid than Roosevelt's had been; but on the whole it was satisfactory to Roosevelt and the conservationists generally.

Wilson's cabinet as a whole was probably as heartily in favor of conservation as Roosevelt had been. It was another member of Wilson's

cabinet, Secretary Josephus Daniels of the Navy, who initiated an additional aspect of the conservation policy, and it was a recent departure from Daniels' policy that led to the present scandal.

Daniels foresaw that oil was going to succeed coal as fuel for ships. He initiated the policy that new vessels built for the navy should be equipped for oil-burning. At the same time, it occurred to him, as a national necessity, that the government should have in its ownership abundant stores of oil to meet the future needs of the Navy.

He initiated a policy to the effect that all oil-bearing lands in the public domain should be strictly safeguarded from private exploitation, and that they should be turned over to the custody of the Navy department.

Then came Harding, and Harding appointed Fall as secretary of the Interior. At best, it was a bad appointment. The chief reason for it was that Fall as a senator had been the friend and companion of Harding.

Fall Detested Conservation. Fall came from the big land-holding business element of New Mexico. All Fall's background and environment contributed to make him a man who detested conservation. He made no secret of it. He far out-Ballingered Ballinger. He believed in turning the public lands over to private interests for rapid exploitation.

Not only did he believe in that respects the lands under his department. He wanted to get control of the public lands in the control of Secretary Wallace of the Department of Agriculture.

Wallace was a strict conservationist of the true Roosevelt school. Also, Wallace was a good fighter. He struck back at Fall, and insisted on retaining control of the forests. Gradually, Harding turned away from Fall.

One of the ways in which the anti-conservationists tried to influence Harding to alienate the public resources into private hands was by citing to him constantly the case of Alaska. That told him the proper development of that territory was being held back by the fact that so much of the land is still in the hands of the government.

Harding's Alaskan Trip. But when Harding visited Alaska, he turned strongly against those who had been urging him to open up Alaska to private ownership. He came back a good conservationist. During Harding's visit to Alaska, he gave expression to marked irritation against Fall.

There was no serious alienation of national resources during the Harding administration. Even the leases about which the present scandals have arisen were not a complete alienation of the land.

The theory was that the oil in the government land was being drained off underground by wells sunk on the adjoining land of private owners, and that it was a wise policy for the government to have Sinclair, Doheny and others drill wells on the government land on a basis of sharing the oil between the government and the companies. Expert geologists denied that the government oil was being drained by the wells on the adjoining property.

## Whisky? Indian Wives? Well, Both Were Plentiful in Frontier Days, but Jim Bridger Never Fell---Not Very Hard---Says Veteran Nebraska Scout

By W. M. MAUPIN.

Was Jim Bridger, famous scout and guide, a drunken squawman, as pictured in "The Covered Wagon," or was he just the average sort of man of his day and age?

Virginia Bridger Hahn, granddaughter of the old scout and plainsman, asserts that the memory of her grandfather has been traduced by the Famous Players-Lasky corporation, makers of the famous picturization of Emerson Hough's famous novel. She insists that not less than a million dollars will be required to salve her injured feelings.

Jim Bridger is in no particular danger of losing his place in the history of American pioneering. But his granddaughter's suit may serve to spread more information about the famous old scout and guide, whose history is now made up largely of tradition. He was a peculiar product of a peculiar and picturesque period in the nation's history.

Through Comrade's Eyes. Fortunately there are those yet alive who knew Bridger in his palmy days, and allowing for the lapse of time, their recollections of him should be illuminating. One of the survivors of Jim Bridger's time and the scene of his activities lives at Central City, Neb. Henry E. Wallis is associated with Bridger as scout and guide; indeed, Bridger gave Wallis, then a soldier, lessons in scouting and reading Indian signs.

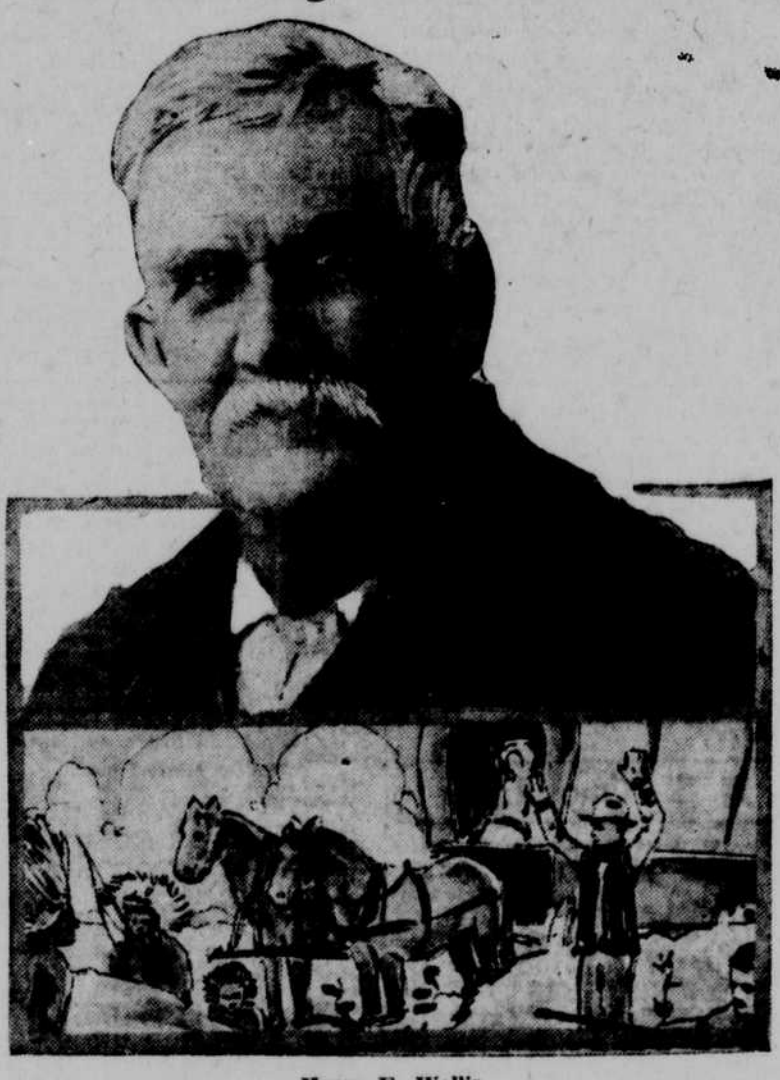
"I reckon Jim drank his proper share of whisky in those days," said Wallis a few days ago. "I don't know of anybody around there in the old days who passed up the drinks when they went around. But if Jim ever got too drunk to attend to business it was when I wasn't around. I was with him every day for almost a year, and I never even heard it intimated that he was a squawman. Jim Bridger taught about 200 of us soldiers how to read 'Injun' signs, and trained us as scouts and guides for that country up around Fort Bridger and Fort Phil Kearney. Part of the time he run a trading post but most of his time was taken up with scouting for Uncle Sam and guiding troops of hunting parties."

Guided by Bridger. "I first knew Jim Bridger when he met the Eighteenth United States Infantry at Dobytown, Neb., and acted as guide from there to Fort Phil Kearney. I served in the navy during the entire war, enlisting from Vermont. I was on Farragut's flag-

ship, the Hartford, and a young fellow named George Dewey was aboard as captain. You may not know it, but George had the lobe of one ear shot off during a little scrap we had while trying to open up the Mississippi. It happened a short distance below Baton Rouge.

"At the close of the war I enlisted in the Eighteenth Infantry and went to Fort Leavenworth. In 1866 the regiment under command of Colonel Carrington went to Omaha by boat, and from there we marched the entire distance to old Fort Phil Kearney in Wyoming. Bridger met us at Fort Kearney in Nebraska, and acted as our guide the rest of the march. Whisky was about as cheap then as milk is now, and the supply unlimited. About the only thing we enlisted men had to look out for was not to be found it up while on duty. The officers weren't always so particular. Bridger took on his share, but he wasn't a drunkard as we looked at it in those days."

Killing Off Indians. "We had a few little brushes with the Indians on that long trip, but nothing worth telling about. They were building the Union Pacific in those days, and our duty was to spread out to the north of the road and keep the Indians back. You know the Sioux had a habit of wintering down in Kansas, where they ate up the buffalo meat they gathered mostly during their summering away north in Wyoming, Dakota and Montana. Some wise fellow down in



Henry E. Wallis.

had to look out for was not to be found it up while on duty. The officers weren't always so particular. Bridger took on his share, but he wasn't a drunkard as we looked at it in those days."

"One thing that put a crimp in Red Cloud and his braves at the wagon box fight was the fact that just a short time before we had been equipped with the newfangled breech-loader rifles. Old Red Cloud hadn't heard about them, and he thought that after the first volley from that little handful of men he'd have easy pickin's. So right after our first volley he sent his braves charging in and they got it proper. Red Cloud had more respect for Uncle Sam's soldiers after that."

Evening of Adventurous Life. Henry F. Wallis was born in Vermont in 1843. He enlisted in the

# WELLS SAYS EUROPE'S GREED MAY KINDLE COMMUNISM

By H. G. WELLS.

Author of the Outline of History. London, Feb. 9.—So Lenin is dead. He died on the eve of recognition of the soviet government by the western powers. For most practical purposes the work of Lenin was over before 1920. His death now or a little later would make only the smallest difference in the destinies of Russia.

For the communist party which still controls Russia has this in common with the Catholic church, that it is sustained by a system of dogmas, disciplines, experiences and traditions much stronger than any single individual that individuals, though they may serve it more or less effectively, cannot control or deflect it.

Russia, under communist rule is at the opposite pole to such a phase of affairs as would evoke Caesarism. It is over the western Latin democracies subjected to the adventures and ravages of uncontrolled rich men, that dictators arise. Lenin was never in reality such a dictator as Mussolini. He impressed one as being in the grip of forces quite beyond his control, albeit they were forces he had himself helped to develop and organize.

Communism and Fascism. Communism is definite, directive, compelling; fascism is a dramatic, empty, vague, violent thing, a bold competent rider. A score of Lenins might die and communism would go on as though nothing had changed. Without Mussolini, the fascist might do anything, fall into the torrent, get lost, destroy society, vanish and bring no new light.

little thing with small hands clasped together upon a corner of his desk, little feet that dangled from his chair far off the ground. He was very bald. I learn now with astonishment that I was the older man. He put his amusing Mongolian face a little on one side as we talked, with something of the wary expression of a fencer.

When he found out I didn't want to score points for or against communism, but to learn what they proposed to do next, he dropped any appearance of controversy and laid his views and plans before me very frankly.

His schemes for the reorganization of Russia seemed to me to be right-minded, honestly conceived; but artful and cunning. He had a scheme for the election of Russia that struck my usually quite imaginative mind as hopelessly impractical. It ignored distances; Russia is a country consisting mostly of distances.

I suppose no gambler who stakes his all upon a single throw and wins as he was ever as astonished as the bolsheviks when they came into power in 1917. They went into Russia like good revolutionists to make trouble and die. They found themselves presently in scarcely disputed possession of a completely exhausted country. Even in 1920 they seemed a little incredulous to find themselves still there.

It is important to grasp the fact that the former Russian political and social order was bankrupt, collapsed of its own accord, because it is the lesson that private adventurers of the west are most loath to learn. Communism not often devours healthy states; it is rather the scavenger of the rotten.

You cannot say communism is either strong or spreading rapidly as an aggressive doctrine in Europe. And yet it may still come to prevail over great parts of Europe. Europe is sick and set against its own cure.

The decay of the monetary system, without which private capitalism is a totally unworkable system, spreads in a European community saturated with ideas of greed and eager for private gain.

The European system is not being seriously attacked from without, least of all by communism. The whole social order was bankrupt, collapsed of its own accord, because it is the lesson that private adventurers of the west are most loath to learn. Communism not often devours healthy states; it is rather the scavenger of the rotten.

good. Germany follows Russia. Its enemies, without, the big business of great area in which the communist may make his experiments. And the collapse shows no tendency to end at the Rhine. It may be that tinkering cannot save the European system now; that it is destined to pro-foundly, more drastic changes than we are willing to admit as necessary.

Perhaps the root is too rotten with self-seeking. Perhaps the communist with all his faults, his wastefulness and ugliness of method, has something vital to teach the world, if it is no more than discipline, devoted subordination to large ideas.

Perhaps the whole European system, like Russia, may after all need to be regrafted upon this new, strange root of communism before it enters upon a fresh creative phase. But it is plain to me that the years pass and the recovery of Europe does not begin.

## CHAMPIONS OF A FEW LOST CAUSES

By O. O. McIntyre

There are so many things to reform and so little time when one has an urge to become an amateur reformer. In New York, for instance, I scarcely know where to begin. Something I feel should be done about the passing of collapsible drinking cups across the row in theaters. It does more to unshrink the resplendent white vest than to quench thirst.



Finally the Conversation Dies Down. "Show Me Piston Rods for Wrist Watches." You Demand.

tion that no husband is good enough for a first-class wife. You will hear Mike say at 2 o'clock in the morning at the club that he has the "best little woman that ever drew the breath of life." He calls her up a half hour later to say, "Dearie, those people from Pittsburgh are keeping me up. I want to get away but a big deal hinges on me sticking around. Hope the canary bird is keeping you company. I'll not be late to breakfast."

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