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Sacramento Daily Union, Volume 6, Number 794, 10 October 1853 — Water Works Contract. [ARTICLE]

Water Works Contract.

The readers of the *Union* are advised that we have been the earnest advocates of a system of Water Works to furnish Sacramento with an abundant supply of pure water, for all purposes. But the contract about to be consummated by the Council, we do not favor, and beg leave to enter our protest against it.

What do the Council propose to do? They are about closing a contract with Mr. Kirk to put up a house which will answer to put a reservoir on, and furnish rooms for all the city authorities, for which they agree to pay him some \$120,000 in city bonds, drawing an interest of ten per cent. per annum. This contract is to be given to Mr. Kirk without adopting the usual course of advertising for bids, thus giving him a preference over all others. Why is this? What right does the Council possess to adopt such a course against all usage and precedent? Are they private individuals, acting for themselves, or are they the public servants of the people of the city of Sacramento, and acting for them? If they are acting for themselves, if they are directly interested in this contract, they are probably right in going ahead with it; but if they are acting for the people, a pause in their headlong career will be advisable.

The people should be heard upon this contract. To them should be submitted the question, whether this city shall now be involved in

an additional debt of \$200,000, for the purpose of building Water Works. Last January they voted to adopt a plan, which was to cost \$125,000, but the one now proposed will cost about \$200,000. It is a new plan, and before it is adopted, should be submitted to a direct vote of the people of the city. This is just to the voters, and is democratic. Let the Council disregard this rule of action, and the people will hold them to a stern accountability.

No contract of this magnitude should be acted upon in a hurry. Time should be given for a full and fair consideration. If it is determined to attempt this job this fall, proposals should be advertised for at least two weeks, in order to give all contractors a chance to bid. But instead of doing this, the Council propose to give one of the most important contracts ever contemplated in the city to the first man who makes an estimate upon it, and that, too, without either giving notice or asking a bid from other contractors.

Mr. Kirk is known to be an efficient, experienced, and responsible contractor; but, is that a good reason for giving him all the city contracts upon his own terms? Give this contract to Mr. Kirk as proposed by the Council, and what will be the inference in the public mind? Simply that the members have acted from other considerations than the public good. To avoid suspicion they must advertise for proposals. No other course will be satisfactory, and should not be.

The reason assigned for this hot haste in awarding the contract, is that there is not time to advertise and complete the works by the 15th December. Not time, say you! What has the honorable Council been doing for the past six months? This subject has been before them

months: this subject has been before them for all that time, and now they come forward with the plea of want of time to do the work before the rainy season, unless they give the job to a particular man at his own price. Out upon such nonsense! If this job is done at this season of the year, and in as much haste as proposed, it must and will cost about twice as much as it would if undertaken in the spring. It is wretched economy to undertake it at all this late in the fall. It should be postponed until spring. During the wet season water works are not so important to the city as in the dry season.

The re-organization of the Fire Department and the new cisterns will answer for the coming wet season, and the people may be spared a debt of \$200,000 until another year, at which time, in our opinion, they will be enabled to have the same work done for a little over one half the money. And further, why add \$200,000 to the city bonds of Sacramento now in market? Her bonds are now selling at 33½ per cent. discount, and will certainly not improve under an operation that will throw another large amount upon an overstocked market. By postponing this work until next year, at least 20 per cent. would be saved to the city in the sale of the bonds, and 40 per cent. in the work.

Our City Fathers should recollect that at the expiration of their term, excluding Water Works bonds, the bonds of the city out will reach nearly or quite \$800,000, perhaps more; that the interest on this large amount has to be paid, and, in addition, \$100,000 of the principal, during the financial year of 1854.

These are stubborn facts, in view of which the Council should consider well before unnecessarily adding to the heavy burthen now resting on the shoulders of the tax-payers in the

city.

UNITED STATES TROOPS AT THE NORTH.—
The Shasta *Courier* informs us that Col. Wright and battalion have returned to that place. Col. Wright and command did not have an opportunity of participating in any of the skirmishes which took place before the ratification of the late treaty. He had, however, an opportunity of seeing the principal chiefs, and, from his observations, is of the opinion that no more difficulties will occur this fall or winter with the Indians.

For the more perfect security of the settlers in that quarter, a post was established in the vicinity of Table Rock, in Rogue River Valley. There will, therefore, be a sufficient number of troops in the North this winter to meet any emergency.

The health of the troops is uniformly good.

Col. Wright is of the opinion that nearly all the immigrants have arrived who intend coming in on the Yreka trail this year, and that the removal of the troops will consequently be productive of no evil consequence.

The encampment of Lieut. Bates, in the vicinity of Tower's House, has been broken up, and he passed through this place on Wednesday last, on his way to Fort Reading.

INDIAN KILLED.—From the Shasta *Courier* we learn that on Tuesday last two Indians were killed in the vicinity of Mill Seat creek, by Mr. Mackley, son of a gentleman whose death occurred last week. They were friendly to the whites, but mistaken for enemies by Mr. M.

NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT JUDGESHIP.—The rumor that W. P. Daingerfield, Esq., had been appointed Judge of this district is not confirm-

ed. The *Shasta Courier* says that it is currently reported that Hon. J. W. McCorkle has received the appointment.

THE new Insane Asylum at Stockton is nearly completed, and the patients will be removed to their new and more comfortable quarters in a few days.