REMARKS BY ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF RECLAMATION
GILBERT G. STAMM BEFORE THE FIRST ANNUAL REGION 2
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Organizational Management and Water User Relationships of the Bureau of Reclamation

It is always a pleasure to visit this fabulous area of our Nation.

I have been asked to discuss organizational management of the Bureau of Reclamation and relationships with water users. To treat these points comprehensively would require a presentation that I believe would be too long and heavy for a banquet agenda item. I would soon see people looking at their watches, and then start shaking them to see if they had stopped.

So, I expect to exercise the latitude Reg Howard gave me to shorten my remarks on the assigned topic, and then show you some colored slides from several so-called developing countries I visited recently. Water user organizations as we know them in the United States are virtually nonexistent in those countries, and so are the highly successful water
resources development projects we have here.

The two go hand in hand.

Throughout its 65 years of existence, Reclamation has promoted the development of irrigation districts and other water user organizations as the key to the formulation, authorization, and operation of water resource developments in the western United States. Those same 65 years have seen many dynamic changes in the organization and administration of the Reclamation program. As a matter of fact, there is very little in life that hasn't changed. Tennis — two cats: "my old man in that racket."

This is as it should be. Benjamin Disraeli, over a century ago, said, "In a progressive country, change is constant." The Reclamation program was established in 1902 as the Reclamation Service in the Hydrographic Division of the Geological Survey. Six years later the Congress made it a separate agency. Its original mission was to irrigate the dry lands of the West, making them capable of settlement, and thereby to build on those arid acres a viable economy which would benefit not
only the specific areas involved but also the country as a whole. As water needs escalated and altered in nature, the Bureau's mission has evolved and expanded to meet them. The multiple-purpose concept of project formulation was adopted long ago, and today no project is formulated without considering the various and interrelated functions of irrigation, hydroelectric power, flood control, municipal and industrial water supply, water quality improvement, outdoor recreation, and fish and wildlife enhancement.

Sources of water of concern to the Bureau have also expanded. In its infancy the Bureau concentrated primarily on surface water flows. Now it is concerned with coordinated development of all four sources of water—surface water, ground water, atmospheric water, and sea water.

Also in its early days, the Bureau built single-purpose projects at single sites; soon its operations involved development of the entire length of streams, then of whole river basins, and now it is engaged in interbasin development
as the most efficient and most effective method of meeting the Nation's many-faceted water needs.

During its first 40 years, Reclamation's planning, construction, operation, and maintenance were conducted by the Chief Engineer's office in Denver, while the office of the Commissioner in Washington provided broad policy guidance, fiscal services, and liaison with the office of the Secretary, with other agencies, and with the Congress. Experience began to reveal that we were too far from the people.

Studies initiated by Secretary Ickes in the late 1930's resulted in the establishment at the end of World War II of a regionalized organization, consisting of 7 regions, formed along river basin lines, to provide a more flexible organizational structure and, more importantly, one that would place the administrators in closer relation to the people to be served. Field offices were established at or near field operations. This brought the Bureau employees into close contact with existing and prospective water and power
users, and has facilitated handling of organizational, operational, and management problems. 

more expeditiously and effectively.

The principal engineering and research staff in Denver, which had gained world-wide recognition for its outstanding capability, was retained in Denver, to perform research, design, construction supervision, and other technical service and supervision for all the regions.

Today, some 23 years after the regionalization took place, Reclamation is one of the most highly decentralized agencies in the Federal Government, both from the standpoint of staffing and from the standpoint of program control. Annual programs of about $300 million are administered and executed by some 11,000 employees in the 17 Western States, while top administration, policy guidance, and governmental liaison are provided by only about 220 employees in Washington. The remaining employees are distributed among the offices of the Chief Engineer, the 7 regional offices, and 105 field offices.
Under the present-day organizational management of the Bureau of Reclamation as established in the mid-40's and under the policies established by the Congress over the years, the accomplishment and benefits in water resources development have been significant, not only to the specific areas of the West where projects are located but also to the entire Nation. Proof of this is too voluminous to recite here. Also, it is obvious to water users of this region.

Suffice it to say, irrigation revolutionized agriculture in California. Late in the 19th century, California was growing about 3 million acres of wheat with a production of 42 million bushels and was the leading wheat producing State in the Nation. Today, wheat is a minor crop. At the turn of the century, fruit and nut crops in this State were grown on only 600,000 acres. Today, such intensive high value crops, including vegetables, are grown on 40 percent of the total commercial farmlands in the State. Farm operators in California, on the average, have the second
highest level of living of any State in the Nation, according to the 1964 index developed by the Department of Agriculture, exceeded only by Arizona farmers. Reclamation projects in Region 2— which includes all of California north of the Tehachapis, southern Oregon, and western Nevada— contain over 20 percent of the total irrigated acreage on all Federal Reclamation projects. They produce over 20 percent of the total tonnage of all Reclamation crops, and represent nearly 40 percent of the total crop value produced. Irrigated acreage in Region 2 nearly doubled in the past 10 years, increasing from about 900,000 acres in 1956 to nearly 1.8 million acres in 1966.

These gains have not been without problems. This region, in recent years, has had a major share of appropriated Reclamation funds for planning, construction, and operation and maintenance of Reclamation projects, but it also has contributed with a major share of the headaches. Many problems
currently exist, and we are jointly trying to resolve them. Again, detailed discussion will be omitted except to mention that they relate to such things as: the 180-acre limitation, the disposal of San Luis drainage water, the establishment of water quality criteria in the Delta, contracting with Delta water users, coordinated planning for development and transbasin diversion of North California coastal streams, equitable distribution and management of the limited waters of the Truckee and Carson Rivers, and transfer of operation and maintenance of the Klamath Project facilities to water user organizations.

Problems exist in part because of differing points of view. Considering accomplishments, problems, and continuing progress, one factor which undoubtedly has had a significant influence on the success-side of the ledger is the friendly cooperative relationships which have been established and maintained in most areas between the people who manage the Federal program and the water users for whom the service is provided. In many instances these productive relationships have extended over a long period of years.
Many of us in Reclamation hold strongly to the belief that everything we do must be for the benefit of people. Monumental structures, though glamorous and pride-generating, should never be considered the end objective of Reclamation. They are merely the means to the end. The end objective must be to develop our land and water resources efficiently and effectively to produce maximized benefits for present and future generations. These benefits may accrue in any or all of such areas as better income, stabilized economy, more production and energy to meet human needs and demands or human comforts, improved living standards, expanded economic opportunities, conservation of the environment, enhancement of fish and wildlife resources, creation of expanded outdoor recreational opportunities, pollution abatement, and flood control.

Also many of us believe that we are and properly should be working for the water users within the established authorities and guidelines laid down by the Congress and the Administration.
We believe our job is to administer the program for the maximum benefit of the people and, thus, the Nation. To do this we must keep the lines of communication open; we must have frequent, sympathetic contact with water user groups and their representatives. We need to understand each others' problems, authorities, objectives, and reasoning behind various proposals and actions. Arbitrary actions have no place in this philosophy. It is for the purpose of improving our mutual understanding and of improving our service to you, the water users, that this conference was arranged. Hopefully we shall more fully let us recognize the advantages that can be gained by sincere "reasoning together" and so work harmoniously for even greater understanding and success than have been experienced heretofore.

We are ready to implement these objectives. Now, with your indulgence I would like to use the remainder of my time to show you how people live in other countries where the art of organization and private-Government cooperation in water resources development have not advanced as extensively nor as successfully as in the
United States. I would like to take you quickly through several countries where production per person and production per acre are very low, and progress to areas where significant gains have been and are being made.
Of the countries included in my slides tonight, Nigeria is the least advanced in agricultural technology. Farming in the northern region is almost totally by hand methods—not even animal power is available for plowing and cultivation. The first few slides show a small Filani village which is typical of those which dot the northern Nigerian arid countryside. Each tribe or family group lives within a compound. The way people live is a reflection of how well they utilize their resources. India boasts of its vast irrigated acreage. True, millions of acres have been irrigated for many years after a fashion, and a number of large storage reservoirs have been constructed. However, conveyance and distribution systems leave much to be desired. Frequently, water is released through a single turnout to serve several hundred acres. The water is herded crudely, inefficiently, and ineffectively along natural draws, roadways, and borrow pits to the scattered fields. India.

Afghanistan, again, boasts of 12 or 13 million acres of irrigated land, but due to lack of storage, stream regulation, and conveyance systems, a high percentage of the so-called irrigated land receives water perhaps once in 5 years. Again, no water user organizations exist except the tribal or family groups which are a poor substitute for a legally constituted irrigation district when unified action within a valley is needed to build and operate an efficient system. Thailand—Great potential—Production is easy in the southern part. Korea is making commendable progress. A sizeable cadre of competent trained engineers and technicians is employed in its efforts. A former Korean mission director said last month that the status of the Koreans in 1950 was about equal to the Afghans today. If so, progress has been exceptional.
Manila. This one slide on Manila is intended to show how our people on foreign assignment suffer.

Taiwan is very heavily populated. Its agricultural methods are primitive, using hand labor for virtually all operations, but its lands are intensively farmed. The Chinese in the southern part of the island produce 4 crops a year and crowd a 15-month growing season into a 12-month year. This is accomplished by interplanting a second crop before the first crop is harvested.

In supporting its 100 million people, Japan, with one of the highest rates of productivity per person and per acre, uses mechanical farming methods and farms her lands intensively.

Hawaii. The Bureau of Reclamation has no foreign activity in Hawaii; however, these few slides of planting, irrigating, harvesting, handling, and processing sugar cane are a far cry from the sugar cane process which you saw in India, and I thought you might be interested in the contrast.

Sunsets are beautiful. As Lady Bedina said as she was getting off her knee, 'Thank you for your attention.'

But just one last word—will all the shortcomings, inefficiencies, and apparent strife in the Democratic System of the USA, I haven't seen any other system anywhere in the world for which I would trade.