Remarks by
Gilbert G. Stamm
Assistant Commissioner for Resource Management
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of the Interior
At The Dedication Ceremony of
Toa Vaca Dam and Reservoir
Puerto Rico
July 20, 1972

WATER FOR PEOPLE THROUGH COOPERATIVE FRIENDSHIP

I was very pleased to be invited to this dedication ceremony and also to be asked by the Commissioner of Reclamation Ellis L. Armstrong to represent him on this happy occasion. He asked me to convey his regret that the press of duties and prior commitments kept him from being here.

He also asked me to express the Bureau's deep appreciation for the kind words of Felix Cordova Díaz, who wrote in his letter of invitation that, "We certainly enjoyed having the Bureau personnel working together with us in this project."

We in the Bureau of Reclamation are grateful that our agency was privileged to serve as Architect-Engineers for construction of Toa Vaca Dam which will result in a better life in future years for many thousands of people of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
When we were asked in 1966 to assist in this fine structure, we viewed the request not only as an opportunity to share our technical skills but to solidify further an old and esteemed friendship.

Water development in the United States and in Puerto Rico has formed a common bond between us for over 50 years. We have progressed together ever since the day of Jack Savage and Foster Tovle, whom a few of you may remember as representing the Bureau of Reclamation on water matters in Puerto Rico as far back as 1922.

In the course of working with your representatives over the years, we have been favored by countless acts of personal kindness and professional courtesy that have made our part of the joint efforts immeasurably easier and more pleasant. I only wish that all of those in the Bureau of Reclamation who have had a part in planning and construction of the Toa Vaca Project could be here today to witness the culmination of those endeavors.

The vision and foresight of such men as former Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Water Resources Authority, Rafael V. Urrutia, along with other former and present day officials, such as Don Pedro Colon Pagan, Harold Toro, Renan Colon, and Julio Negroni will long be remembered. And, of course, especial credit must be given to your present director, the Honorable Felix Cordova Diaz.

I won't attempt to name all those from Reclamation who from time to time have had a part in this project. However, the ones with whom you who is here today, have had very close recent association include Tom Bixby, who was the first supervisory construction engineer on the job, and his successor,
Max R. Johnson. The former Director of Design and Construction at the Bureau's Engineering and Research Center, Mr. Barney Bellport, and the present Acting Director, Mr. Harold Arthur, also had a significant role in our cooperative efforts with the Water Authority and share in the satisfaction of a job well done.

The Toa Vaca Dam, important as it is to the water supply for the south slope of this beautiful island, is really only the first phase of a larger, complex water supply system. Future phases contemplate storage of surplus water on the north slope and conveyance of that water also to bolster not only the water supply but the economic, social, and cultural development of the south coastal plain. The Bureau of Reclamation has been intimately associated in one way or another in planning for the broader project and stands ready to continue our cooperation with the Puerto Rican officials in bringing future phases of the total project to fruition. I understand that final design and specifications for continuation of the Basta-Toa Vaca Tunnel, being prepared in our Denver Engineering and Research Center, are virtually complete.

In closing let me express in behalf of the Bureau of Reclamation our sincerest hope that time will prove this structure to be of immeasurable benefit to the people of Puerto Rico, far beyond our original estimates and fondest hopes. Again, thank you for the privilege of joining you in this dedication ceremony.
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