Almost two years ago, I had the privilege of spending an evening with you here in Vernal. I was very much gratified to have your invitation for a return engagement at this time.

It is always a refreshing experience for me to come back here to this almost idyllic setting, to renew my acquaintance with you, to share your hospitality, and to benefit from your wisdom and from your encouragement.

In the third annual report of the Upper Colorado River Commission, which has just been transmitted to the President of the United States and to the Governor of each of the Upper Basin States, and which will soon be printed in quantity, the Commission has this to say, in part:

"There is evident within the Upper Colorado River Basin a notably encouraging spirit of cooperation with the Commission as well as a determination on the part of individuals and groups desiring primarily the development of the water resources of this or that locality, nevertheless to carry their share of the burden of securing authorization of the entire initial stage. As an illustration of this spirit of cooperation and of this determination, mention ought to be made particularly, but without excluding others, of the efforts of individuals and groups in and about Vernal, Utah. Moving pictures and slides of the Green and
and Yampa river areas, which they have exhibited with appropriate narrative on more than one occasion before highly influential groups, will, no doubt, have telling effect in the long run. These independent, but related, activities of individual groups become of increasing importance in the light of evidence that officials of the National Parks Association have been calling upon members of the Congress to urge against the authorization of the Echo Park dam. The activities of the group in question perfectly complement the message carried in a leaflet distributed by the Commission during the past year, which leaflet is entitled "Echo Park Dam - Fact and Fiction".

By your own activities, you have given the best possible proof of your determination that the Colorado River Storage project shall be translated soon from a dream to reality. You would hasten the day when the gigantic system of reservoirs that is comprehended within the term "Colorado River Storage project" shall be placed in operation, making possible the consumptive use apportioned to the Upper Basin States by the Colorado River Compact of 1922. So would I. You would hasten the day when releases from those self-same reservoirs shall generate electric power and energy on a vast scale. So would I. You would hasten the day, when the magnificent lakes formed behind the dams that will be constructed shall afford recreational opportunities now largely denied. So would I.

We work together, in other words, to bring these things into being as soon as possible.

There are those among us, however, who think of the authorization of the Colorado River Storage project and its participating projects in terms of benefiting posterity, of doing something important
for the welfare and the security of coming generations. It is but natural, therefore, for them to look with a degree of philosophy upon the extensive gestation period which attends the physical birth of our project. They tend to console themselves with the thought that it took our Sister State, California, no less than six years to accomplish the authorization of Hoover Dam and its incidental works even after the first Swing-Johnson bill was introduced in the 67th Congress. There are those, too, who consider that even the authorization of the great works which we have in mind must await a happier day when peace, or at least a semblance thereof, shall have been restored to the world, and when taxes shall have been reduced.

I confess that I belong to neither of these schools of thought. I belong rather to the school which can no longer accept the thesis that great patience should attend the extraordinary delays with which we seem to be faced in achieving the authorization of our project. I know that many of you here this evening feel as I do. I hope and I believe that the group to which we belong is growing in numbers day by day. Let those among us who are disposed to condone the endless delays that seem to face us at every turn, look for a moment at the record of our efforts to-date. Our efforts began shortly after July of 1947, when the Department of the Interior published an inventory of possible water resource development projects in the Colorado River Basin, wherein it was said that "The States of the Upper Colorado River Basin... should be encouraged to proceed expeditiously to determine their respective rights to the waters of the Colorado River consistent with the Colorado River Compact." The five Upper Basin States took that admonition seriously. They began almost immediately and in all earnestness to
negotiate what thereafter became known as the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact. They had in mind, and very properly so, the statement made on July 23, 1947 by James E. Webb, then Director of the Bureau of the Budget, to the effect that, when the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact had once been entered into, ratified by the several State legislatures and consented to by the Congress, the authorization of works for the development and utilization of the Upper Basin's water resources would be in accord with the President's program. Such, in effect, was the promise that was then dangled before us to induce the commencement of negotiations.

We achieved an Upper Colorado River Basin Compact, and that was no mean achievement, in which a number of you, who are present this evening, had your part. I was fortunate enough to have been selected as the legal adviser to Harry W. Bashore, the Federal Representative in those negotiations. Although my own part in those negotiations was humble, I take much pride in it. You may well take pride in the extent to which you yourselves participated, whether directly or indirectly, in bringing about a compact which, the representative of the Federal Government predicted, would become "a tower of strength...perhaps for centuries to come"; a compact of which each part was said to have been "wrought with great care by men who are notably skilled in their professions and experts in the compact process"; a compact which, he said, would "positively foster the conservation and development of the water resources of this vast area..."

The Upper Colorado River Commission is a creature of that Compact. No sooner was it organized than it set about the business of securing release by the Department of the Interior of its report on the
Colorado River Storage project and participating projects. The first obstacle seemed to consist in opposition by the conservation sisterhood to the authorization of a dam in a part of the Dinosaur National Monument. We met that opposition and we overcame it. The Secretary of the Interior finally decided in favor of the authorization of the Echo Park dam "in view of the demonstrated need for water" and in view of the promises that had been made, at the time the Dinosaur National Monument was enlarged to take in the Echo Park area, that such enlargement would not be allowed to interfere with the use of the area for water resource development.

We finally persuaded the Secretary to include the Echo Park dam in the proposed project and, quite some time later, to release the report on the project for comment by the Colorado River Basin States. We then encouraged our member States to prepare their comments as rapidly as possible and to coordinate them. No comments received from any State of the Colorado River Basin are adverse. The only adverse comments of which I am aware have come from General Pick, Chief of Engineers, United States Army. General Pick's comments have been demonstrated to be without solid foundation. Ever since all comments on the project were received in Washington, we have pressed vigorously for release of the project report to the Bureau of the Budget and to the Congress. We shall continue to do so, because we have every reason to press vigorously for the prompt authorization of the Colorado River Storage project and participating projects.

Let me tell you why it is that I do not belong to any school of thought which accepts with patience and forbearance delays in the authorization of our project.

The Colorado River System has been described as a menace. It
is, in fact, a villain which annually robs us of 131 million 472 thousand tons of good soil - more than enough, in other words, to build a 4 by 5 foot wall around the earth at the equator. All of us who know that this is happening - whether we occupy high office in local, State, or Federal Government or whether we be but humble citizens - and who do not seek to stop it, are accessories after the fact to the rape of our land.

Most of this good soil is deposited each year in Lake Mead where it piles up to heights such that, in a comparatively few years, as history goes, the useful life of Lake Mead will be concluded. All of us who know that this is happening and who do not seek to stop it, are accessories after the fact to the gradual destruction of the taxpayers' investment in a noble structure.

Every year, on the average, there is wasted into the Gulf of Mexico and the Salton Sea enough water to supply the domestic needs of more than 50 million people - enough, in other words, to supply the domestic needs of a city more than six times the size of New York; fourteen times the size of Chicago; twenty-five times the size of Los Angeles; one hundred and twenty times the size of Denver; two hundred and seventy times the size of Salt Lake City; five hundred times the size of Albuquerque; and one thousand five hundred times the size of Cheyenne.

Perhaps I need say nothing about power. Probably no one in this room is unaware of Utah's needs in that respect. You know the situation that has prevailed in the vicinity of Jensen. And you know that the Department of Agriculture has taken the position that there has been "an acute shortage of power" to supply the needs of that area and that such acute shortage "is not limited to the immediate vicinity of the
Uintah basin. Similar shortages are evident in many parts of the Upper Colorado River Basin and in the Lower Basin as well. Yet — every year, on the average, there is wasted, by lack of use for that purpose, enough water to develop sufficient electric power for nearly three million families — power having an annual net value of millions of dollars. Can you think of a suitable characterization of this waste? I leave it to you. I do not dare publicly to use the terms that occur to me. I do say that, Korea or no Korea, international tension or no international tension, our country can not afford the appalling, the astronomical waste of resources that is involved in delays attending the authorization and construction of the Colorado River Storage project and participating projects.

A little over two years ago, in my maiden speech as Secretary of the Upper Colorado River Commission, I said: "We know not when nor where another world-wide conflict may break out. The contribution of the West to the winning of World War II never has been and never can be fully told. As we build for peace, prosperity and contentment, so do we build for strength and for national security. God grant that our country may not be called upon again to yield up its riches and its strength in another war. But, should it be called upon to do so, how immeasurably greater can be the contribution of the Upper Basin if it has proceeded well on the way toward the attainment of its full development?"

This aspect of provision for the national defense is not being neglected in other countries. It has not been overlooked in France, in Australia or in Russia, to name but a few. Why should it be neglected here? And, have you thought, too, about the role of our Rocky Mountain country as a refuge in this atomic age? If all out war should come, we will probably learn about it from the bombing or attempted bombing of such exposed and
strategic centers as New York, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Our country's capacity for survival will then depend in large part upon the extent to which provision has been made in its mountain fastnesses for the stabilization of watersheds, for the storage of water for domestic and industrial needs, for the union of land and water, for the development of hydro-electric power.

The questions that confront us all — the questions that must be posed to the Executive and Legislative branches of our Federal Government are:

How long will you countenance the rape of our land? How long will you countenance the waste of our resources? How long will you countenance neglect of the potentialities for national survival that lie in the development, conservation and utilization of our water resources?

Presidential commissions may produce tenes. Federal agencies and Congressional committees may bicker over this or that nicety of jurisdiction or procedure or this or that theory of allocation and distribution of costs or calculation of benefits. Our conservation sisterhoods may chain their weeping members to the fossilized glories of the past. Yet all the while these questions remain unanswered and omnipresent as the sword that badgered Damocles.