A MESSAGE TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
COLORADO STATE ASSOCIATION OF R.E.A. COOPERATIVES
AT GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO
FROM JOHN GEOFFREY WILL
SECRETARY AND GENERAL COUNSEL
UPPER COLORADO RIVER COMMISSION

I very keenly regret my inability to be present in person for the annual meeting, at Grand Junction, of the Colorado State Association of R.E.A. Cooperatives. The support which the Upper Colorado River Commission has had in the past from your Association and from the individual Cooperatives is a matter of record. I have always felt free to ask for your help. I have never been turned away by an R.E.A. cooperative, by the Colorado State Association, or by your national organization. All of you played an effective part, for instance, in the hearing held by the Secretary of the Interior on April 3, 1950, in connection with the Echo Park dam—an integral part of the Colorado River Storage Project—which would affect a small part of the Dinosaur National Monument in Utah. You were likewise enthusiastic in your support for the authorization of the Collbran project, which will mean so much to the Plateau Valley and to the City of Grand Junction.

There is good reason for the close cooperation that has marked the relationship between the Upper Colorado River Commission and your State Association of R.E.A. Cooperatives. It seems to me to arise from the realization that your membership comprises many irrigation farmers who would like to see the Colorado River Storage Project and participating projects translated from a dream to reality at the earliest possible moment. It seems to me to arise also from the fact that all of your members are well aware of the urgent need, growing daily more acute, for additional sources of electrical energy and for means of distributing that energy in such a way that it will become truly available on an equitable basis.
The Upper Colorado River Commission will make every effort to secure the authorization of the Colorado River Storage Project and participating projects by the 83rd Congress. The success of this drive will depend in large part on the extent to which the Commission's efforts are backed up by the citizens and organizations in each State of the Upper Colorado River Basin. The extent to which they support our efforts this Fall and Winter will, I suspect, depend in turn on the degree to which they appreciate the significance of this project to their welfare and future prosperity and to the welfare and prosperity of those who will come after them. I venture, therefore, to summarize the principal features of the Project. It consists of the following principal dams, with accompanying reservoirs, power plants, and transmission facilities: Echo Park, Flaming Gorge, Glen Canyon, Navajo, and a dam or dams in the Gunnison River Basin. The dimensions of structures to be constructed in the Gunnison River basin have not yet been finally determined. A committee of the Colorado Water Conservation Board is working on that problem at this time. Two of your members who are helping to solve that problem come to mind. They are: Mr. F. M. Petersen, of Delta, and George Cory, of Montrose. The participating projects, which also include power generating and transmission facilities related thereto, are: the initial phase of the Central Utah project, and the Emery County, Gooseberry, Florida, San Juan-Chama, South San Juan, Shiprock Indian, Hammond, LaBarge, Iyman, Paonia, Pine River, LaPlata, Seedskadee, Silt and Smith Fork projects. The sum total of the Colorado River Storage Project and participating projects is the irrigation of thousands of acres of additional land in Colorado and in the other Upper Colorado River Basin States; the provision of badly needed water for municipal and industrial purposes; and the supplying of electric power and energy in large quantities, at reasonable rates, and with preference in the purchase thereof to public bodies and R.E.A. cooperatives.
The Federal Reclamation Laws, under which the Colorado River Storage Project and participating projects would be authorized, are very clear on this point. The Upper Colorado River Commission has, more than once, announced its whole-hearted support for such preference policy.

I am sure that none of us is unaware of the prosecution of a steady campaign designed to give the impression to the general public that the power needs of our area are not as great as claimed and that the construction of generating facilities now underway and projected will be ample to supply present and future needs. We know, however, that electric energy requirements of the Upper Colorado River Basin and of areas adjacent to it are increasing rapidly. We know that the growing industrialization of the West and the accelerated development of our natural resources are taxing existing facilities to the limit. We know that virtually every power utility in our area has plans for increasing its generating capacity.

We know, too, that, notwithstanding these increases in generating capacity, and notwithstanding the generating facilities that will be provided by the Colorado River Storage project and participating projects, the power demands of our area will, thirty years hence, greatly exceed output.

The R.E.A. cooperatives in the States of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming have a tremendous stake in the prompt authorization of the Colorado River Storage Project and participating projects. This stake is compounded not only from the fact that many of their members are irrigation farmers. It is compounded not only from the salutary preference provisions of the Federal Reclamation Laws. It derives also from cost considerations. In other words, the Colorado River Storage Project and participating projects, considered as a whole, represents their last hope for the most reasonably priced power. I have not heard of a single R.E.A. cooperative, not now obtaining its power in our Upper Colorado River Basin.
from some Federal Reclamation project, which does not feel that the cost of its power comes high.

In the light of all of the foregoing, I venture to urge you to adopt a very strong resolution recommending that the 83rd Congress authorize the Colorado River Storage Project and participating projects; recommending that your national organization support such authorization with all the means at its command; and recommending that the R.E.A. cooperatives in the States of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming adopt similar resolutions.