

WELCOME

President Roger B. Corbett

New Mexico State University

Welcome to the Thirteenth Annual New Mexico Water Conference. Particularly, welcome to those who are here for the first time, and a real strong welcome to the many who have attended before. All of us are needed in the battle to solve our water problems.

We need to make some long-range plans that show a real understanding of the problem. We have had too much of a period of drought when all became alarmed, and following a few rains the alarm was laid aside, as well as the planning. Essentially, we can't be excited and afraid, and then go to sleep on the job.

Some have criticized this Conference because it is too long-range in its thinking. A short time ago I saw a headline in a newspaper that said, "Water for Columbus from Canada." Being so highly oriented to New Mexico, I thought of Columbus, New Mexico, and knew how short water was there, but I couldn't believe that that little town was planning to get water from Canada. It turned out that it was Columbus, Ohio - looking ahead for many years and predicting that it, a large city in a humid part of the country, would need water from Canada. They were thinking 100 years ahead.

It is my understanding that a nearby state, looking many years ahead, has decided that it must find \$400,000,000 to carry out its plans, even if the taxpayers of that state alone foot the bill.

The other day I saw this quotation, "Responsibility is like a hot poker" - no one really wants to take hold of it, but this is a problem that New Mexico as a whole must grasp. It is the "hot poker" of responsibility for our future water supply. This Conference has come nearer to grasping this "hot poker" than any other program in New Mexico. One of our big jobs is to get more persons to take responsibility for the problems.