

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY

Gerald W. Thomas

Formally, it is my pleasure to welcome you here today to the Twentieth Annual Water Conference and to welcome you to the Physical Science Laboratory. This tremendous facility, named after Clinton P. Anderson, handles most of our national defence research. New Mexico State University now is twelfth in the nation among the universities in national defence work. This work is primarily through NASA, the Air Force, the Army, and the Navy. We presently have students and faculty located in twelve countries around the world as a result of the operations here at P.S.L.

You have certainly chosen an appropriate theme for this conference, Water for Energy Development. It is certainly aimed at one of the most critical problems facing the world. Energy and the interrelationships between energy and food are just beginning to be realized.

I had the privilege of participating in the World Food Conference in Rome. At this conference it was obvious that the food problem was tied to the energy problem and was furthermore tied to irrigated agriculture and to water for energy development and to water for other uses. I have written editorials for three scientific journals about the World Food Conference. I would be pleased to send copies of these observations to any of you who would like to have them. As one comment made by Secretary Kissinger at the World Food Conference, "we are here to confront the problem and not each other". Secretary Kissinger emphasized that the world food problem could not be solved without adequate consideration of energy and without adequate consideration of irrigated agriculture. As I see these problems developing and as these interrelationships become more and more realized it is apparent to me that food

will emerge during the next decade or two as the big problem. We now have a short-fall of ten million metric tons of grain and this short-fall for food production world wide could reach eighty-five to one hundred million metric tons by 1985 or 1990. Certainly these food needs will place more pressure on water resources. We will also see more and more talk about the interrelationship between food and water and energy.

I hope that this conference will help all of us improve our understandings of these interrelationships but the problem of communication between and among peoples is always difficult. You can imagine, with 130 nations gathered in Rome to talk about food and with the many languages and many problems of interpretation that took place, how difficult it was for people to communicate. Even in this room, though we all speak the same language, we will not always be talking about the same thing or interpreting the same words in the same way.

I am reminded of a cartoon in "Dagwood and Blondie" recently. Blondie came into the house and told Dagwood that she had just returned from the garden club meeting where Mabel had indicated some dissatisfaction because her hydrangeas were drooping. Dagwood said, "You know, if she would buy clothes that fit she would not have that problem." Even in the same household and even when we speak the same language we don't always do a good job of communicating.

We hope as a result of this conference that you will have an improved appreciation of water and an improved understanding of the important role of water in the economy of this state, the nation, and indeed of the world.

I have the special assignment at this time to introduce a very special guest to the group, Gilbert Stamm, who is the Commissioner of Reclamation appointed in May, 1973.