

advantage. Now before the money for conservation can be used all of the ACP payments have to be taken up, the same way with the great plains money that are available west of Highway 81. So we are putting it back into a place where there is some discretion as to what an NRD would like to use the available moneys for. So all we are trying to do is get back the \$400,000 that was committed by this body just a year ago. Now what continues to happen? In checking with a prominent well driller just this week I asked him how business was. He said, well it is pretty good. It had dropped off some but we are busy drilling new wells. Also, all of us are aware that NPPD is contemplating building a generating plant at Comstock and they will be using five wells to pump water for the cooling of the generator. It will pump, I assume, the year around, perhaps 24 hours a day or close to it, now convert that over to irrigation wells and you will find out that the average irrigation pumping time each year is about \$900 more or less, depending upon the season. This means the installation of the Comstock plant will consume the equivalent of 45, 46, 47 or 50 irrigation wells. Now that is development as we are seeing it take place today. Now if this continues we face nothing except a water shortage sometime in the future. The same way with converting certain types of energy to another type of energy, gasification of coal. No matter how you spell it out it is going to take water to convert energy to a useable kind of source. Also what is happening in the states west of us is something that we need to be alarmed about. It boils down to this. It is simply going to be more development, recharging the underground water, and supplementing the use there of or we are going to need to adopt stricter and stricter rules and regulations. I have always taken the position I think that we need to do both and balance them out. So unless Nebraska wakes up to what is happening and attempts to do something while there is still time, we had better be doing it. I want to alert you as to how serious this thing is. I have before me legislation that is passed in our sister state to the south, namely Okalahoma, whereby they have instructed their water board to have a look at what it would cost and what it would possibly be like to move water from the eastern part of the state to the western part, where a crisis too is developing like in our state. What is going to be the cost? The cost isn't going to be millions of dollars but billions. Something worth seven billion dollars is the estimated cost. Now we know in Nebraska we do not have that kind of money nor can we hope to have that kind of money. But if we on the other hand can't spend \$400,000 to promote development, store some of this water that falls from the sky, we are penny wise and pound foolish. Now what is happening at the federal level?