

State

States discuss water importation

Clements says Texas is thirsty

United Press International
SANTA FE, N.M. — Texas Gov. William Clements says Congress will fund a multi-billion dollar project to import water to a six-state region if the world demands agricultural products from that area.

He made his comments at a news conference Wednesday at the annual meeting of the six-state High Plains Study Council.

"It's a question of how hungry we become," Clements said. "If the demand is there, we will put the water on the high plains, there's no doubt about that," he said.

Clements also said Texas is facing a critical water shortage, adding that the urban need for wa-

ter is as pressing as the rural need. Some of that imported water should be used to alleviate problems in Texas' rapidly growing cities, he said.

Council chairman Gov. Bruce King of New Mexico and other members joined Clements at the news conference.

The council was created by Congress in 1976 to study the ramifications of the drying up of the huge Ogallala Aquifer, and to report back to Congress on its findings. The aquifer covers an area about the size of California and it underlies the six-state region.

The council's six member states are New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska.

But the once-full aquifer is drying up, and unless supplemental water can be brought into the area, more than 6 million acres currently being irrigated will by 2020 be converted to the less productive dryland farming or abandoned, the council was told.

In creating the council, Congress directed it to study the importation of water from within its region or adjacent states.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented four separate proposals that would bring excess water from east of the six-state region to the high plains area. That supplemental water would provide up to 8.7 million acre feet of water a year, depending on which proposal was selected.

The council has not endorsed any of the proposals to date, which would use water from either the Missouri or Arkansas rivers, with additional water coming from smaller rivers.

Bill Pearson, of the Corps' Southwestern Division, said the four plans would range in cost

from \$3.57 billion to \$20.64 billion, based on the value of the dollar in 1977.

And the cost of bringing the water to the region, excluding the cost of delivering it to farmers in the region, would range from \$226 to \$569 per acre foot, Pearson said.

The four proposals would also range in water transport distance from 377 to 863 miles, depending on which one is selected, he said.

A study on the economics of various proposals for the Ogallala area, by the Arthur D. Little Co. of Cambridge, Mass., was also presented to the council.

That study reviewed four separate management concepts: continuing to operate without any further programs, urging voluntary conservation methods, restricting groundwater use, and importing supplemental water.

Of the four plans, importing water would boost the agricultural production more and provide a greater economic base than any other plan, the council was told.

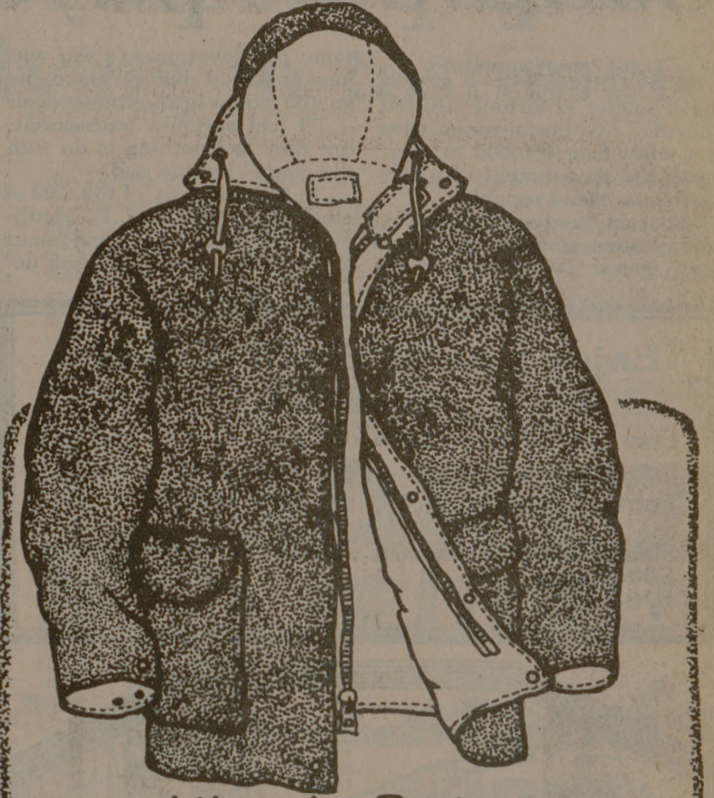
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Texas chief justice says TV and courts don't mix

United Press International
AUSTIN — The highest court judge in Texas agrees with state judges who voted that cameras should not be allowed in the courtroom, saying that from his limited experience he's found the electronic media biased and rude.

Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Joe R. Greenhill said Wednesday he felt a major factor in the recent vote by judges was the behavior of television cameramen.

"It needs to be said that without intending to have a negative affect on the balloting, the local TV newsman did not help matters," Greenhill said of coverage of the state judges convention in Corpus Christi.

Greenhill said he was seated in the front row of the conference room and that shortly after he was seated, several television crews would set up tripods in front of him and another judge, obscuring their view.

"They were out in force and it was all done with lights and without regard to whose lap they sat in,

including mine," Greenhill said.

Greenhill also said most of the journalists stayed only for the portion of the program presenting the pro side of the issue and left before the negative side was presented.

"Some of the judges who weren't so fired up by the idea in the first place said, 'Now is this the way they are going to cover our trials.'"

Judges attending the conference last weekend were asked to mark a four-answer ballot describing their feelings about allowing cameras in the courts.

Of those responding, 137 said they "adamantly opposed" the rule change and 45 indicated less fervent opposition. Only 30 judges said they were not opposed and only six said they favored the proposal.

In light of the vote, the Supreme Court, which issues rules on courtroom procedure, announced it would not change its rules to allow the cameras in. The decision by the nine justices was unanimous, Greenhill said.

Greenhill said the program in

Corpus Christi on allowing cameras was organized to give the judges an objective look at both sides of the issue.

"I'm not sure the trial judges wanted to have this individual say so over whether there would be TV cameras in their courtrooms," Greenhill said. "You all (the press) can put on a great deal of pressure, whether you know it or not. It takes a great deal of courage for a judge to tell them to get out."

Austin attorney Roy Minton, who addressed the conference on the negative aspects of the proposal, said he thought witnesses behaved differently when on camera. Greenhill said he thought many of the judges felt the same way, including himself.

Despite the obvious opposition by the judges, the Supreme Court could have altered the canons to allow cameras in courts on a trial basis.

However, Greenhill said that option was dismissed and that the question probably would not be considered again for several years.

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