

Politics and Water Resources

The Politics of Water in Arizona. Dean E. Mann. University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1963. xviii + 317 pp. Illus. \$6.50.

Arizona is a state in which development has proceeded sufficiently rapidly relative to the available water supply that its water problems are as acute as those of nearly any other state in the Union. Owing to the fact that, in the past, the principal use of water was for irrigation, and that the areas where the water has been utilized were geographically separated from the mountain zones where the water originated, surface water resources were developed fairly early in the state's history.

As irrigation expanded in the fertile valley and desert portions of the state, and far more arable land became available than there was water to serve it, intensive ground water development ensued. This resulted in a total draft on the ground water reserve which was far in excess of recharge, a situation which still persists and one for which no completely satisfactory solution has appeared on the horizon.

Many of the problems developed be-

cause the institutional and legal framework for governing water development was inadequate to prevent the serious problems that now confront the state. In addition, basic data and hydrologic investigations were, and are, insufficient in scope and quantity to forecast, in any satisfactory way, the consequences of various alternative actions that might have been taken.

Mann's book is concerned primarily with the history and status of these administrative and legal results as they are affected by the desires and the consequent pressures of various parts of the total community. But, in addition, the author explains the programs, philosophies, and plans of the various state and federal bureaus whose work impinges on water questions. The politics of the situation are explained in discussing the history that has led to the present situation; but in some respects the title is a little misleading, for the present political attitudes and pressures are not explained with the same force and clarity used in describing the sequence of events in the past. This difference between the explanation of past events and the present situation is understandable, but some of the more interesting intricacies of the present political framework are perforce side-stepped by the author. This can also be seen in the discussion of the attitudes and policies of the state and federal bureaus, the description of which comprises nearly half of the volume.

On the whole, however, Mann is amazingly forthright. In dealing with a situation as complicated as the one that exists in Arizona, no author can be completely forthright and still maintain objectivity; many interpretations of present attitudes and policies could be made, but they depend on the point of view of the observer.

In view of the fact that this is the first book to deal with the politics of water, it is an extremely informative and a highly commendable venture, one that other States should emulate, for such books are much needed to educate the public about water problems. The author conveys to the reader a considerable insight into these complicated matters but nevertheless leaves him with a feeling that this is an objective analysis which attempts to present various points of view in as fair a light as possible. The book is highly recommended to all persons interested in water problems, both administrative personnel and scientific hydrologists, as well as to com-

munity groups interested in the use and development of resources.

It is obvious that a book of this kind cannot be completely up to date, for events proceed apace even while it is being written. However, it is quite distracting to find that portions of the book are up-to-date with respect to the Supreme Court decision on the California-Arizona suit [373 U.S. 546 (1963) *Ariz. vs. Calif.*], which was concerned with the use of Colorado River water, but that other parts of the book, which deal with the same subject, are not. It would have been better to present the situation as it was before the Supreme Court decision was rendered, or to rewrite the book uniformly so that all portions of the volume reflect the Court decision.

LUNA B. LEOPOLD

*U.S. Geological Survey,
Washington, D.C.*