FLOOD AND EROSION CONTROL AS POSSIBLE UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF MEASURES

By L. E. FREUDENTHAL
CHAIRMAN, INSTITUTE OF IRRIGATION AGRICULTURE, AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION, LAS CRUCES, N. M.

Flood control and erosion control are national problems because the extent and magnitude of losses caused and control measures involved are beyond the powers of the individual states to cope with successfully. That the water problem, of which these are part, is of national scope can be shown in various ways.

Many large cities are seriously affected by the problem of getting and maintaining domestic and industrial water supplies; Boston plans to tap a stream sixty miles away; New York brings part of its supply over 92 miles; the Hetch-Hetchy Reservoir, built at a cost of $126,500,000, will furnish part of San Francisco’s water supply from a distance of 200 miles; the water system of southern California will cost $350,000,000.

Irrigation water is a commodity of enormous importance to 19 states west of the Mississippi River, involving an area of 19,547,544 acres and a value in 1930 of lands, building and machinery, reservoir and distributing systems of nearly $6,000,000,000.

Water power is being utilized in practically every state. Twenty-six states, by 1931, scattered from Maine to California, have each developed over 100,000 horsepower.

The inland waterways of the country, exclusive of the Great Lakes and interior and intra-coastal canals, carried 130,000,000 short tons of freight in 1929. The War Department has spent tremendous sums in the deepening and widening of natural channels and in engineering works to make navigation possible during