

REMARKS OF GOVERNOR THOMAS H. KEAN

AT THE

PRESS CONFERENCE ANNOUNCING

NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY WATER SUPPLY EMERGENCY

POMPTON LAKES, NEW JERSEY

APRIL 17, 1985

GOOD MORNING.

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, NEW JERSEY HAS FACED A VERY SERIOUS SHORTAGE IN PRECIPITATION.

IN FACT, RAINFALL IN THE MAJOR RESERVOIR BASINS IN NORTHEASTERN NEW JERSEY FOR THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS IS THE LOWEST IN 55 YEARS OF RECORD. WE ARE PRESENTLY ELEVEN INCHES BELOW NORMAL FOR THAT PERIOD.

OBVIOUSLY, THE SHORTAGE OF RAINFALL IS EVEN MORE SEVERE THAN THAT WHICH WE EXPERIENCED DURING THE DROUGHTS OF THE 1960S AND 1981.

AS A RESULT, I AM TODAY DECLARING A WATER EMERGENCY IN 94 MUNICIPALITIES IN THE NORTHEAST PART OF THE STATE.

THESE 94 TOWNS INCLUDE MOST OF BERGEN AND ESSEX COUNTIES, PARTS OF HUDSON AND PASSAIC COUNTIES, AND SMALL PORTIONS OF MORRIS AND UNION COUNTIES. A COMPLETE LIST OF THE TOWNS IS ATTACHED TO THE PRESS RELEASE WHICH YOU HAVE.

THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

THE COMMISSIONER OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION HAS SUBMITTED A FINDING TO ME THAT THE WATER SUPPLY SHORTAGE THAT NOW EXISTS MAY ENDANGER THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE IN THESE 94 TOWNS.

THAT IS WHAT REQUIRES ME TO MAKE THIS DECLARATION.

MY DECLARATION TODAY MEANS THAT THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS WILL TAKE EFFECT:

- THE WATERING OF LAWNS WILL BE PROHIBITED, EXCEPT FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH ARE DETAILED IN DEP'S ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER.

-THE WASHING OF VEHICLES IS PROHIBITED EXCEPT BY BUSINESSES SPECIFICALLY ENGAGED EXCLUSIVELY IN CAR-WASHING, AND FOR THOSE BUSINESSES THERE ARE CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS WHICH MUST BE MET.

- THE WASHING OF STREETS, DRIVEWAYS, SIDEWALKS, OR
PAVED AREAS IS PROHIBITED.

~~THE~~ SERVING OF WATER IN RESTUARANTS, CLUBS, OR EATING
PLACES IS PROHIBITED UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED BY THE
PATRON.

-SHOWERS AND FAUCETS AT NON-RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES
SHALL BE EQUIPPED WITH WATER SAVING SHOWER HEADS OR FLOW
RESTRICTORS

-THE USE OF WATER FOR FLUSHING SEWERS BY MUNICIPALITIES
IS PROHIBITED UNLESS DEEMED NECESSARY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND
MUST BE APPROVED

-THE USE OF FIRE HYDRANTS FOR TESTING OR DRILLS IS
PROHIBITED UNLESS DEEMED NECESSARY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND
APPROVED BY THE MUNICIPALITY AND THE WATER PURVEYOR

-THE USE OF FIRE HYDRANTS BY MUNICIPAL ROAD
DEPARTMENTS AND CONTRACTORS IS PROHIBITED EXCEPT FOR FIRE
FIGHTING OR PROTECTION PURPOSES

- THERE ARE VERY SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS WHICH WILL APPLY TO THE USE OF WATER FOR THE WATERING OF SHRUBS AT NURSERIES, THE WATERING OF GOLF COURSES, THE WATERING OF CLAY TENNIS COURTS, AND THE FILLING OF SWIMMING POOLS WHICH ARE OUTLINED IN COMMISSIONER HUGHEY'S ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER.

BEYOND THESE SPECIFIC MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS, I AM ASKING RESIDENTS OF EVERY PART OF THE STATE TO RESTRICT THEIR WATER USE ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, AND I AM ASKING ALL COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USERS OF WATER TO REDUCE THEIR USAGE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT LEVELS.

I AM MAKING A STRONG REQUEST -- AN IN FACT I AM DIRECTING IN THE EXECUTIVE ORDER I AM SIGNING THIS MORNING -- THAT OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT GIVE ME THEIR UTMOST COOPERATION IN ENFORCING THESE RESTRICTIONS.

FRANKLY, THE ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS DURING THE 1981 DROUGHT WAS NOT ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE. WE INTEND TO MAKE SURE THAT IT IS THIS TIME.

I AM ALSO MAKING SEVERAL APPOINTMENTS THIS MORNING TO DEAL WITH THE WATER EMERGENCY:

FIRST, I AM APPOINTING A CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE WATER SUPPLY EMERGENCY. THE COMMITTEE WILL BE CO-CHAired BY DR. PAUL ARBESMAN, THE FORMER DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF DEP WHO WAS DROUGHT COORDINATOR IN 1981, AND DR. SAUL FENSTER, THE PRESIDENT OF NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

IN ADDITION, WITHIN D.E.P.:

- DR. RICHARD DEWLING, THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, WILL SERVE AS DROUGHT COORDINATOR.

- JOHN GASTON, THE DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES, WILL SERVE AS LIAISON TO ALL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE DROUGHT

AND DIRK HOFFMAN, THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES, WILL CHAIR THE WATER EMERGENCY TASK FORCE, WHICH MAKES VARIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND HAS VARIOUS RESPONSIBILITIES CONCERNING THE DROUGHT.

WHAT MAKES THESE ACTIONS NECESSARY IS THE FACT THAT THREE OF THE FOUR MAJOR RESERVOIR SYSTEMS IN THIS PART OF THE STATE -- NAMELY THOSE OF THE NEWARK WATER DEPARTMENT, THE HACKENSACK WATER COMPANY, AND THE NORTH JERSEY DISTRICT WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM, WHICH INCLUDES THE PASSAIC VALLEY WATER COMMISSION, ARE AT DANGEROUSLY LOW LEVELS -- THEY ARE IN DROUGHT STATUS. BASICALLY, THEY ARE ONLY AT ABOUT %) PERCENT OF CAPACITY.

JERSEY CITY'S RESERVOIR SYSTEM IS NEAR CAPACITY, BUT BECAUSE JERSEY CITY'S RESERVOIRS FEED THESE OTHER SYSTEMS THROUGH INTERCONNECTIONS, USERS OF THE JERSEY CITY WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM ARE ALSO BEING INCLUDED IN THE RESTRICTIONS I HAVE ANNOUNCED.

UNLESS SIGNIFICANT RAINFALL OCCURS IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WE MAY FACE A PROBLEM WORSE THAN THE 1981 DROUGHT. THIS IS BECAUSE THAT SHORTAGE OCCURRED AS AUTUMN WAS APPROACHING -- THIS SHORTAGE COMES JUST BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE HOT WEATHER SEASON, WHICH OBVIOUSLY CARRIES WITH IT HEAVIER WATER DEMANDS.

SO ALTHOUGH TODAY'S RESTRICTIONS ARE LIMITED ONLY TO THE 94 MUNICIPALITIES ON THE LIST BEFORE YOU, THE ENTIRE STATE IS BADLY IN NEED OF RAINFALL. IF IT DOES NOT COME, WE MAY HAVE TO INCREASE THE STRINGENCY OF THE RESTRICTIONS IN THESE TOWNS, OR TO IMPOST RESTRICTIONS ON OTHER PARTS OF THE STATE.

AT THIS TIME IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO IMPOSE RATIONING OR TO TAKE EMERGENCY STEPS TO TAP NOW UNUSED SOURCES OF POTABLE WATER, BUT THESE STEPS WILL BE TAKEN IF THEY BECOME NECESSARY.

I THINK IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT WE HAVE TAKEN A NUMBER OF STEPS IN THE LAST FEW YEARS TO IMPROVE NEW JERSEY'S ABILITY TO WITHSTAND DROUGHTS. THESE INCLUDE:

- THE DREDGING OF THE DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANAL WHICH WILL RESTORE ITS 100 MILLION GALLON PER DAY CAPACITY. THIS WILL BE FINISHED THIS FALL.

- THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WANAQUE SOUTH PROJECT, WHICH WILL INCREASE THE YIELD IN THIS PART OF THE STATE BY 79 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY. THIS INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF AN AQUEDUCT CONNECTING THE WANAQUE RESERVOIR WITH THE ORADELL RESERVOIR (WHICH HAS BEEN COMPLETED); A BUILDING OF A PUMP STATION ON THE RAMAPO RESERVOIR (WHICH IS COMPLETED); AND SEVERAL OTHER PROJECTS.

- A \$72 MILLION PROJECT TO PROVIDE 31 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY FROM THE MANASQUAN RIVER.

- AND A NUMBER OF SMALLER PROJECTS, SUCH AS THE INTERCONNECTION BETWEEN THE NEWARK WATER SYSTEM AND THE ELIZABETHTOWN WATER COMPANY, AND THE INTERCONNECTOIN OF THE FOUR MAJOR WATER PURVEYORS IN NORTHERN NEW JERSEY AT GREAT NOTCH.

SO WE HAVE, IN FACT, MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN IMPROVING OUR ABILITY TO COPE WITH A WATER SHORTAGE.

WE CANNOT, HOWEVER, COMPLETELY MAKE UP FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY LACK OF RAINFALL.

INTERCONNECTIONS WILL DO US NO GOOD WHEN THERE IS SIMPLY NO RAIN.

THAT IS THE SITUATION WE FACE TODAY -- A 55 YEAR LOW IN THE AMOUNT OF RAINFALL.

THAT IS WHY THE RESTRICTIONS I HAVE ANNOUNCED THIS MORNING ARE REQUIRED.

THANK YOU.