

solemn promise of years past still is dependent for fulfillment on construction of the Oahe unit.

I thank the distinguished chairman and members of this committee for this additional step in the fulfillment of this promise.
(The statement referred to follows:)

STATEMENT OF HON. BEN REIFEL, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE
STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today for the purpose of urging you to authorize construction of the initial stage of the Oahe Unit of the Missouri River Basin Project in South Dakota.

As we all know, the Oahe Project, a dream of a quarter of a century, was envisioned in the Missouri River Basin Plan approved by Congress in the Flood Control Act of 1944. The resulting plan that is before the Committee now is the product of the Bureau of Reclamation, the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of the Budget, the study of Committees and of many people in the several States that are affected by the plan. We must recognize the Missouri River Basin Project as a comprehensive, integrated, basin-wide undertaking which is only partially completed, and study the Oahe Unit as one of the additional steps in the overall basin development.

In doing so we cannot ignore the legislative history over the last two decades which has already established the guidelines for the federal role and responsibilities in the Missouri Basin.

The Flood Control Act of 1944 has been referred to as a "framework rather than a blueprint." However, some basic commitments were made at that time by the states involved making the effect of the Flood Control Act a compact, ratified by Congress, assuring the upper basin States that their sacrifice of productive lands to provide benefits for the lower basin would be compensated for by full development of other potentialities in the upper basin States.

Any material change in the course of the development of the basin project would be unfair to our State. Residents of South Dakota have counted on the promised irrigation since the first planning was started for the Missouri River Basin Project in order to justify the large sacrifice in agricultural land which the reservoir required. South Dakota has lost some 887,000 acres of land to the four main stem reservoirs constructed within the state. These include 83,000 acres of fertile bottom lands and 180,000 acres of high quality grazing lands.

In a speech given in South Dakota last year the Honorable Walter Rogers stated:

"The project is only partially completed. The most important part of the project from the standpoint of South Dakota has not been built. Irrigation development in this State and other upstream states has lagged behind development for the other purposes.

"To a great extent, the benefits flowing from the project at the present time accrue to downstream interests at the expense of up-river states. I know that several hundred thousand acres of prime agricultural and wildlife lands in the South Dakota flood plains of the Missouri River are now inundated and removed from use by the main-stem control structures.

"I know also that towns and villages have been uprooted and that thousands of Indians have had to be relocated. I know what these actions have meant to your state in terms of reduced income and reduced tax base, and I would guess that up to this time the overall impact of the Missouri River Basin Project on your State has probably been negative."

It is extremely important to the economy of our State and to the future of our United States that construction of the Oahe Irrigation Project be started as soon as possible.

The Oahe Unit is a multipurpose, water and land resource development project encompassing irrigation, municipal and industrial water supply, recreation, fish and wildlife, flood control, pollution abatement, and area redevelopment. The first stage is designed to develop a dependable water supply from the Missouri River for 190,000 acres of irrigable land in the Lake Plain area of northeast South Dakota adjacent to the James River and to provide municipal and industrial water supplies for 23 communities. It is anticipated that as the total project