

As a result of the Flood Control Act of 1944, as has already been noted and discussed by the members of the committee, a multipurpose resource project was laid out for the Missouri Basin, involving as its keystone a series of great dams and reservoirs on the Missouri River in North and South Dakota, supplementing the Fort Peck Dam which had already been constructed in Montana.

At that time, the Congress contemplated and authorized the Garrison diversion unit and the Oahe unit in South Dakota as a part of this multipurpose water resource development program, by incorporating the provisions of Senate Document 191 into the act.

Since that time, the project has moved ahead. The great dams have been built. Thanks to their existence the unusually heavy runoffs of last season and this season are now stored in this great series of lakes stretching across North and South Dakota and up into Montana. Flood control has been provided. Water has been available for navigation in the lower States of the Missouri Basin and also in the Mississippi River down to New Orleans. Hydroelectric power has been available.

As has already been noted, it has made rural electrification and other development possible in eight of the 10 States of the Missouri Basin.

In 1962 and 1963, as a result of the congressional concern and as a prelude to the authorization of the Garrison diversion unit, we were required—and I know it was our duty—to take a careful look at the entire Missouri Basin project from the point of view of its financial stability.

One of the things that we learned—we knew it before but it was driven home very graphically in these studies conducted by the Department in 1961, 1962, and 1963—was the tremendous delay that had occurred in the construction of the reclamation features of the Pick-Sloan plan, particularly in the upper basin States. That, of course, is why we are happy to be here today. It can be convincingly argued, and it already has been, that there is a national obligation to the States of North and South Dakota and the other States of the Upper Missouri Basin, to proceed with the development of these projects that are required in order to permit these States to reap the benefits that Congress envisioned in 1944 when the Flood Control Act was enacted.

I think it is my responsibility, however, to base my presentation to you this morning essentially on the basis that the Oahe unit in South Dakota is sound, and in the interest of the State of South Dakota and the people who live there and in the national interest. That will be the essential thrust of my presentation.

If I were to make a short form presentation this morning, Mr. Chairman, I could very easily say to the committee, as has already been noted, that the Oahe unit in South Dakota is almost identical, except for its physical features, with the Garrison diversion unit in North Dakota.

The Garrison diversion unit, in large part because of your interest and support, has been authorized by the Congress and is under construction.

The two States, North and South Dakota, have almost identical climates. They have almost an identical economy. They are the two most agricultural States of the Union.