

In return for this assurance, South Dakota citizens have permitted the flooding of hundreds of thousands of acres of what was our most productive farmland to provide water storage areas to prevent flooding on the Missouri River downstream. This valuable cropland has now been lost forever, and along with it the income that would otherwise have been produced from these lands.

In addition to this, substantial tax revenues for local tax districts have also been lost forever because of the resulting flooding of the entire Missouri River Valley within the State of South Dakota. This serious economic loss to the people of our State can at least be partially replaced by the development of irrigable lands that lay generally up and down the James River Valley, which is approximately 100 miles east of the Missouri River.

All other phases of the multipurpose river development project within our State have now been completed. It is time now to move ahead with the irrigation phase of this multipurpose project.

2. The development of the first stage of the Oahe irrigation proposal, which involves a potential of 190,000 acres of irrigated land, primarily in Brown and Spink Counties, will reestablish new economic opportunities for the people in this area which will result in great benefits to the citizens of South Dakota as well as to people throughout our Nation and, in fact, the world.

I have read on many occasions statements by economists, agricultural leaders, and politicians that in a short time adequate food supplies will no longer be available in our country to meet the growing needs of our people and others beyond the borders of our great Nation. The vast amount of foodstuffs that can be produced on this highly irrigable land that you are being asked to authorize at this time can do much to alleviate this anticipated shortage.

3. Some opponents of this project have expressed the view that increased irrigation at this time will only contribute to present-day food surpluses which, because of price supports, have caused a drain on the general taxpayer of America and have had the added effect of depressing prices for certain agricultural commodities. I do not think that this will be the case at all.

Figures released by the Bureau of Reclamation in June of 1965 indicate that the development of this first stage unit of 190,000 acres will actually have the effect of reducing those crops which have been in surplus. This will come about by reduction in thousands of acres of cropland that are presently being used to raise grains now in surplus, by the diversion of these acres to the raising of crops not in surplus but which may be needed for both feed and forage purposes.

For example, acreage currently used for the raising of surplus crops of barley, oats, and wheat would be reduced by over 75,000 acres, thus tending to reduce the surplus of these grains, while such crops as sugar beets, certain sorghums for feed, increased use of pastureland, et cetera, will be increased providing new sources for food not now in surplus. This will result in savings to the taxpayers by reduced support payments.

4. South Dakota is a sparsely settled State. This first stage alone will provide an additional 14,000 jobs for our people or others who may wish to come to our proud State for a better and more healthful way of life.