

Perhaps one of the most outstanding displays of public support was demonstrated at a hearing regarding the Oahe unit held by members of this committee at Redfield, S. Dak., on May 22, 1967.

At that time approximately 600 people (508 registered), a great percentage of them farmers who would be directly affected by the project, attended. These farmers took time from their field work to be present and indicate their interest to the committee.

In many instances this necessitated a day's absence from field work which was already considerably behind schedule due to a late spring.

I believe the results of these actions expresses better than words the tremendous support the people of the subdistrict have for the Oahe unit.

I would also like to call to the committee's attention the fact that the initial stage of the Oahe unit has received a strong endorsement from the National Rivers and Harbors Conference as set forth by the June 8, 1966, report of the Project Committee to the 53d National Convention of the National Rivers and Harbors Conference.

South Dakotans are anxiously looking forward to the realization of the Oahe irrigation unit. The people of the subdistrict have taken many steps to place them in a position to assume the financial obligations that will be required of them. We now await the action of the Congress.

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to appear before this committee and earnestly urge, on behalf of the Oahe conservancy subdistrict, your favorable consideration of S. 6. I would be happy to respond to any questions which you may have.

Senator McGOVERN. Thank you very much, Mr. Holscher. I think you know how much we are all looking to you for continued leadership in implementing this project.

The statistics that you cite concerning local support in the State for the project, in my judgment, are in considerable part a result of the work, the effort and leadership of you and your colleagues on the subdistrict board which you have already given to the advancement of this irrigation proposal.

I am pleased to see that your very able manager, Jim Lewis, is with you, and Ray Gallagher, your attorney from Redfield, who so ably represents the group.

I do want you to know we appreciate not only this very well drawn statement that you have given today, but also the part that you played in our Redfield hearings, and your previous interest in connection with this project.

There is just one question I would ask you concerning the point where you were outlining the agricultural benefits of the program. I think we all recognize that that is the chief benefit that would come from bringing irrigation to eastern and central South Dakota.

While this 190,000-acre project lies largely within two counties, is it not true in a livestock economy, the kind we have in South Dakota, that by assuring the feed base in that area, we are, in effect, stabilizing our entire livestock industry across the State, from border to border?

Mr. HOLSCHER. It is very true. Even though we may not have an irrigation district in my home county, they will have the assurance of