

necessary for the implementation of this project. Support was also shown by the attendance of over 700 people last May 22 at a field hearing in Redfield, S. Dak. The people of South Dakota stand ready to do their part in utilizing the irrigation potential made available by this unit.

The Rural Electric Cooperatives of South Dakota, along with all other segments of our economy, stand ready to do their part to bring proper utilization of the Oahe project into reality. Every rural electric cooperative located in the area covered by the Oahe unit, as well as others, recently completed an intensive irrigation study in order to determine their power requirements so that they may fulfill their role in the development and utilization of the Oahe unit.

This administration has stated on numerous occasions that ways must be found to provide new opportunities in the rural areas. The construction of this project will help realize this goal and thereby benefit the Nation. The entire country today is concerned about the migration of our citizens from the rural areas to the urban centers. The construction of this project will reverse this trend in our area, thus benefiting the Nation.

The success of American agriculture, and the failure of many parts of the world to feed itself, has placed a responsibility on us to provide not only enough food for our own needs, but to help feed a hungry world. The construction of this unit, resulting in an increased stability of agriculture, will help us fulfill our commitment, not only to the Nation but to the world.

Mr. Chairman, the 36 rural electric cooperatives of South Dakota have unanimously resolved support for this entire project. The eventual development of this 490,000-acre project on the plains of South Dakota, though seemingly far removed from our teeming urban centers and their myriad problems, will in our opinion be of significant importance to all sections of our great Nation for the reasons we have given in this presentation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity and our thanks to the committee for its kind attention.

Senator McGovern. We appreciate having your statement, Mr. Ford.

Our next witness will be Mr. Chester Gullikson, president, Northern Electric Association.

The REA's obviously have an interest in this project. We are glad to have a number of their representatives here today.

STATEMENT OF CHESTER GULLIKSON, PRESIDENT, NORTHERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., ABERDEEN, S. DAK.

Mr. GULLIKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Chester Gullikson, from Brown County, S. Dak. I represent, as president, Northern Electric, Inc., Aberdeen, S. Dak., and Gullikson Farms, Bath, S. Dak.

Northern Electric is a rural electric distribution cooperative serving a major portion of the Oahe irrigation unit in Brown and northern Spink Counties, and will be greatly affected with the coming of irrigation.