

This field hearing is being held at my request primarily to permit persons who cannot find it possible to come to Washington to place their views in the hearing record. Most of our State officials have been asked to appear in Washington at a later hearing rather than to make their principal statements here today.

We are privileged to have our Governor with us this morning and we will hear from him very shortly.

The views of those who will be directly affected by the irrigation project are most important to this committee and although we are going to be pressed, as you can see, for time here today to hear some 78 or 79 people who have been asked to be heard, I think we can surmount that difficulty by using a procedure whereby a number will be asked on a volunteer basis to submit their prepared statements for the hearing records. We can't possibly hear all of the statements of everyone represented in this auditorium today.

I would appreciate, if at all possible, if witnesses would limit oral statements to about 3 minutes. Perhaps you can summarize your prepared statement in that length of time or less and then we'll see that the entire prepared statement is made a part of the hearing record. This is the way most committee business is transacted in these field hearings. There are seldom more than two or three or four members of the full committee present and it is established procedure to take prepared statements, which are then printed. All of the Members of the Senate will have access to that hearing record.

I wish that everyone in the room some time during the course of the day, if you have not already done this, would sign one of the cards that are available from the girls at the registration desk so that we have your name and address. That will be an invitation from you to be sent a copy of the committee hearings when they are printed.

Let me just give you full assurance that your statement will be given just as careful consideration by the committee if you submit it in writing as if you were giving it orally. Mr. Roy Whitacre, the staff member down here at the end of the table, will collect your written statements and we would like to have you report to him if you are willing to have your statement submitted in writing.

When the Oahe project is completed, it will cover some 495,000 acres of irrigable land. We are talking today about the first stage of that project as envisioned in Senate bill 6, which is the first 190,000 acres, or roughly 40 percent of the project area.

The Secretary of the Interior has already approved the first stage project. That approval came in October of 1965, and in 1966 the Secretary recommended that construction be included in the administration's program. The Budget Bureau is now reviewing the project prior to a recommendation to the President and we have been assured that it will be completed with its work just as soon as possible so we can proceed with the hearing in Washington, D.C.

The first witness today is Mayor Gilbertson, of Redfield, who has been given a little precedence as spokesman for our host city. I am going to call on him first, not only because he is the gentleman who will welcome us to Redfield, but because of the nature of his statement and, then, I think, we will call on Governor Boe for his statement.