

your understanding in making it possible for our people to have this opportunity to testify with what has been referred to as the grass-roots level with respect to probably one of the most important projects that we can visualize to befall the State of South Dakota. I by no means would wish to usurp the time of the many persons who are here and who are awaiting the opportunity to testify in person, if at all possible.

As I look around me in this room, I see not only persons who have probably labored their entire lives and devoted time and energy to arrive at this stage, the first hearing in South Dakota with respect to the Oahe project, and I see persons whose parents, and probably grandparents, have also looked forward to a time such as this.

It would be my pleasure, and certainly my purpose, to accompany as large a delegation as possible to Washington when the official hearings are conducted there with respect to the Oahe project.

I would, however, like to urge all of the men and women, gentlemen, who are here today to avail themselves of this fine opportunity that you as a subcommittee of the U.S. Senate are affording to them.

I might say that the Oahe irrigation project in my opinion constitutes the greatest economic impact that could ever be realized upon this State of South Dakota.

I know Senator Burdick is aware of the facts I am referring to, as is our good Senator, George McGovern; but I can think of nothing, no other program, which could give a greater impetus to the growth and development of not only this particular area, but our entire State, than this Oahe irrigation project that we are now considering in Senate bill, S. 6, and in so doing, we are considering utilization in South Dakota of one of our own resources; that is, water, which has been expressed by you, gentlemen, as one of our most precious resources.

I know most of you are familiar with the history of the development and construction of the four main-stem dams upon the Missouri River in South Dakota itself and we had in mind three fundamental purposes; namely, the control of water as it flowed through South Dakota on to the south and into the Mississippi, flood control; we had in mind the generation of hydroelectric power, and, gentlemen, we had in mind irrigation. I would say that flood control now has been successfully accomplished. We have, through the help of the Federal Government, through the Rural Electrification Administration and other agencies of the Government, brought electricity to the rural areas of the State of South Dakota and to the industry and cities and made use of these tremendous investments which have been required in the construction of these dams. But there remains one further ultimate objective, which I know will be given the fullest consideration and every effort made to accomplish it; namely, the development of irrigation in South Dakota.

I would like to say for the record, Senator Burdick, that we certainly appreciate the assistance and cooperation of the people of the State of North Dakota and the help that they have given us in our efforts. The latest bit of assistance has been that of the water resources commission of your State when they passed an official resolution, sent same to your committee, which is on file, urging the implementation of the Oahe irrigation unit. It is for this reason that I would hope that the efforts which you are putting forth in coming to South Dakota