

discuss the Oahe project. I found the interest very keen and favorable to the development of the project.

I most respectfully submit this report to this hearing.

Senator McGOVERN. Thank you, very much, Mrs. Swope.

Now, we will hear from Mr. Dean Sorenson of the Pierre Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Sorenson is a member of the State House of Representatives for the State of South Dakota.

I think after Mr. Sorenson testifies we will hear from Roy Terwilliger, if he will be ready to go next.

STATEMENT OF DEAN P. SORENSON, REPRESENTING THE PIERRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. SORENSON. Honorable Senators, I am here representing the Pierre Chamber of Commerce and others. I am a representative of Hughes, Stanley, and Sully Counties.

The members of the Pierre Chamber of Commerce fully support the first phase construction of the Oahe irrigation project. We feel that there is a great need for this project. It is our hope and the hope of the landowners in the counties living along the proposed Pierre Canal that these facilities be designed and operated so as to provide water throughout the entire irrigation season. Approximately 80 farmers in this area have signed up indicating their interest in getting water for irrigation. Hughes and Sully County land is marginal. Average rainfall is 16 inches per year, 12 of which occurs during the growing season. Neither county has ever produced a full crop. Soils in the area are fertile and could produce feedstuff on a stable annual basis with the advent of irrigation. This will increase the tonnage of livestock produced in the area. The net effect would be to stabilize the livestock industry in this area and to stabilize the tax base. The availability of water, and the potential that it would create, and the sale of it would do much for the many small communities in this particular area which are almost totally dependent upon agriculture.

Further, a younger generation of farmers is appearing, anxious to adopt new production techniques, to stay on the land, and to maintain the family farm. The effect here would be to stabilize the population of this area.

A great part of the land in use in this area is devoted to the raising of wheat which is a particularly hazardous crop, frequently destroyed by drought. The availability of irrigation would permit the conversion to many of the more "sophisticated" crops of higher value, providing yet another boost to the general economy. For these reasons we urge the initiation of phase I of the Oahe irrigation project as soon as it is possible to undertake.

Senator McGOVERN. Thank you Mr. Sorenson, for your statement.

STATEMENT OF ROY TERWILLIGER, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA BANKERS ASSOCIATION

Mr. TERWILLIGER. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am Roy Terwilliger, executive secretary of the South Dakota Bankers Association, which is the organization representing all bankers in the State of South Dakota, both State and National. I appear today to express the complete support of the Oahe irrigation unit by the banking industry of South Dakota.