

I am confident that irrigation would enable our family, and many other families like us, to substantially increase the income from our farm so that this would be possible, leaving the jobs in town for other people who might need them.

Also, we have a son who is a high school senior this year. We would like to expand our farm business so that he can come back to the farm when he completes his college training, or if he doesn't wish to farm, to an agriculturally related job in this area.

We have good land; we have the manpower; all we need is the water in order that we might do our share in feeding the people in our county, State, and Nation. Thank you.

Senator McGovern. Thank you, Mrs. Beckler. I think you have reminded us again of the close relationship between a sound agriculture and sound family life.

Mr. Paul Hofer, is he here? Mr. Hofer is the president of the Spink County Farmers Union.

STATEMENT OF PAUL P. HOFER, PRESIDENT, SPINK COUNTY FARMERS UNION, DOLAND

Mr. HOFER. Senator McGovern and Senator Burdick, and honorable members of this Power and Water Resources Subcommittee of the U.S. Senate, I am Paul P. Hofer, representing the Spink County Farmers Union, an organization of 505 Spink County farm families, 48 percent of our county's farm population.

At our organization's regular meeting on January 29, 1966, a resolution was adopted supporting the early development of the Oahe irrigation unit. A copy of this resolution is enclosed with the testimony I am presenting. Our support for the Oahe project was reaffirmed when the Spink County Farmers Union on April 27 of this year unanimously passed a resolution to that effect.

We have long recognized the need for making use of our water resources and of the necessity for irrigation. We feel that eventual completion of this Oahe project can inject new lifeblood into our State's entire economy, affecting both agriculture and the businesses that are so dependent upon the success of our farming industry.

I have lived in Spink County for 48 years and have witnessed the many vagaries of our South Dakota weather—the intermittent periods of drought, the fluctuations of cold weather and hot, and the hot southwest winds.

Because of the instability of farming, certainly partly due to the risk of drought, farmers have left the land in our country and throughout the State in droves in recent years. We are hopeful that this project can help halt this exodus from the land.

As is pointed out in the resolution which accompanies this statement, the Oahe irrigation unit will not only stabilize our farming operations but it will also enhance the establishment of agriculture processing industries and provide new job opportunities for our youth, many of whom are now leaving the State to find adequate employment.

The farmers of Spink County believe in irrigation and want to make use of our water resources. This is evident just from the numerous farmers in my area alone that have dug irrigation wells in the past 3 or 4 years.