

unit to South Dakota. You and your staffs have examined the economics of the Bureau of Reclamation proposal in great detail. Senator McGovern has introduced legislation which would authorize this project and it is this legislation which brings you here today. When you return to Washington, I want you to have the clear and distinct impression that the people of South Dakota need this investment in our future. It has been delayed too long already. We urge its immediate authorization and construction.

Thank you.

Senator BURDICK. I might add, at this moment, that we see about as much of this in North Dakota as you do.

We would like for you to come up and make use of this lignite coal of ours.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Senator. I like that invitation and I will do so.

Senator MCGOVERN. Thank you so much, Senator Jones.

I know. Members of the Senate have heard Senator Jones testify over the years and we especially appreciate his appearance here today.

Senator BURDICK. I presume that, when you add a number of thousands of farmers to this new area, the load on the REA is going to increase and you have more business.

Mr. JONES. We have the idea that the more farms we have the more load there is on the REA, certainly.

Senator BURDICK. And you are reasonably prepared to make this service when the time comes?

Mr. JONES. They tell me the lignite coal in North Dakota is unlimited, and we are going to use some of it.

Senator BURDICK. I got him to say it.

Mr. JONES. I must say that most of our power presently comes off the Missouri River, but we are happy to be supplementing it now with a very fine resource, which comes, we find, from the adjoining State of North Dakota. The economics of it are just right and consequently we use it.

(The statements and resolutions referred to follow:)

STATEMENT BY THE LAKE REGION ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC., MAY 8, 1967

Lake Region Electric Association, Inc., is a rural cooperative providing electric power to 2,827 rural consumers in Day, Marshall and part of Roberts counties in northeastern South Dakota.

For several years, our members have given their support, in the form of resolutions at their annual meetings, to approval of the Oahe Project. They have directed their board of directors to actively promote and seek authorization of the project.

The first stage of Oahe will not provide irrigation water for our service area. Future development can cover a large area of Marshall County and Day County. However, our area will receive some water from the Garrison Project which will extend from North Dakota into the uppermost extremities of Marshall County.

At the risk of repeating what others testify today, we are convinced that this project can reverse the trend toward fewer farms. Throughout our project there are at least 500 farms that once received electric service from Lake Region which today stand unoccupied. This means the cost of building the line which once served them must be paid for by the members who remain on the farm. From their standpoint, we see a need for stopping this exodus by building the Oahe project.

Corn farmers in our area look at 40-bushel corn crops as a pretty good year.