

division's closing have tried to create a picture of utter desolation and failure, a failure that they maintain would come because of soil conditions, no matter what efforts they might have made.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that Midvale Irrigation District has been working throughout this time for a program of rehabilitation, drainage, canal lining and structure replacement on Midvale. This program would cost several million dollars.

Could you imagine a more explosive situation than there is today in Washington? Congress is tired of hearing about the plight of the Riverton project as painted by the third division detractors. They have demanded a solution. Presented as the answer is a program calling for expenditure of several millions of dollars.

Representative Haley of Florida says the lands should be abandoned and let the ducks paddle around. The Bureau's spokesman Johnson testifies that "with-out completion of canal lining, drains, and structure rehabilitation, the Riverton project can be expected to deteriorate progressively and rapidly to the point of virtual abandonment."

Riverton people remember the hearings conducted by Senators Hickey, McGee, and Burdick in Riverton at which time no favorable testimony was permitted without strong objection.

Wouldn't it be a hilarious development, if, while most of the project farmers were hauling a record crop to market, Congress decided to take the advice of the third division people and abandon not only third division but the whole project?

Sound ridiculous, doesn't it, but to read the headlines, hear the speeches of the critics, one would think there's no good side to tell about Reclamation farming around Riverton. If any farmers are doing well on Midvale or third division, it might be well to speak up, before the case is so badly overstated that something drastic and calamitous takes place.

It would be good for morale if some farmers would tell this newspaper a success story about farming to help restore the equilibrium.

---

[From the Riverton (Wyo.) Ranger, Oct. 9, 1963]

*Against abandonment—*

CHAMBER TAKES STAND FOR IMPROVEMENT OF PROJECT

The Riverton Chamber of Commerce, by action of its board of directors and agricultural committee, has urged Congress to take a stand for continued improvement, not abandonment of the Riverton irrigation project.

In a letter addressed to Senate and House leaders, the chamber said irrigated farming has been the mainstay of the Riverton economy during all of its 57 years.

The chamber pointed out that some lands have gone bad.

"But for the most part, good farms, operated by people with a desire to farm, plus the capital and the know-how to carry out their aspirations, make up the biggest part of the Riverton projects," the chamber said.

In regard to third division of the project, where the commissioners contend the project is unfeasible and should be abandoned, the chamber said it trusted that the Congress would be fair in correcting injustices.

"But it is our sincere opinion that there are farmers who can successfully operate a good share of the third division lands, make a reasonable return for their efforts, and repay a reasonable amount to the Government for the Bureau's investment in the area," the letter said.

"It is certainly in this area's interest that the question of third division's future be decided. The persistent attacks on the project's feasibility by those convinced they cannot make a go of farming undermines the confidence others have in their own abilities and in their land," the letter said.

"The tendency of news media to headline the adverse criticism has damaged the reputation of one of the best farming areas in the West. Contrary to the impression many have that Riverton project is about to be abandoned as a failure, most of the good farmers are harvesting record crops this year.

"Our remarks are not made with any intention of sugar-coating. Nor would