

dam which now crosses the river between South Dakota and Nebraska, about sixty miles up stream from Sioux City, Iowa.

After these very important reasons came the opportunity for irrigation of our dry areas and the generation of a great amount of hydroelectric power.

It must be borne in mind that storage reservoir areas now comprise and total approximately one-half million acres of land—land which has been taken out of production—land which has been forever taken from the tax rolls. The total storage potentiality within these giant reservoirs is in the amount of 34-million acre feet.

Indeed, the state of South Dakota plays the vital and important role in providing the many benefits which have resulted to those states located to the south of our borders, and through which the Missouri River flows. For, as the result of the construction of these dams and reservoirs, control of flood waters has been accomplished by the channelization and stabilization of this great and meandering river, thereby giving our sister states to the south from St. Louis to Sioux City, Iowa, a practical and efficient medium of transportation.

It is with respect to the very important uncompleted and unforged link in the potential navigational chain concerning which I particularly speak to you today.

A 60-mile stretch of river still remains free to meander unchecked and unrestrained through a valley ranging from two to ten miles in width, eroding and threatening some of the richest and most productive farm land in the midwest.

The unrestrained flow of the Missouri River from Gavins Point southward to Sioux City, Iowa, indeed is a serious economic detriment and burden to this region of the states of South Dakota and Nebraska. It would be hoped that the same assistance and cooperation would be given to our riparian agricultural land owners with respect to bank stabilization that has been given to land owners bordering the banks of the Missouri as it flows southward.

Nebraska, South Dakota, and the entire north central area served by the upper reaches of the Missouri River are blessed with fertile soil. Agricultural production potential is great. Last year in South Dakota, yields were as high as 60 bushels of wheat per acre. Corn yields were from 100 to 125 bushels per acre. The need for low cost water transportation to provide a means of transporting our agricultural produce to markets is, therefore, completely evident. Lower freight and transportation rates will become a reality. A savings to the extent of ten cents a bushel upon grains produced in the midwest area will result.

Economic benefits will accrue to our area, which up until now find it possible and profitable to use water transportation in the distribution of their products, only so far up the Missouri River to Sioux City, Iowa. Fertilizers, cement, structural steel, pipe, and many other items of production will then be transported upstream and made available at a reduced cost into the economy not only of South Dakota and Nebraska but our entire upper midwest area.

Favorable action on the part of Congress with respect to the extension of the proposed Missouri River navigation channel will be one of the greatest stimuli in the industrial development of a portion of our great nation, which even in 1968 might to a degree be considered virgin territory. The Federal government, throughout the course of the past years, has spent billions of dollars to help improve the economic and social conditions in the various areas of the United States of America. Vast appropriations have annually been made to produce a climate where economic growth and development might be insured. Vast appropriations are made to create economic assistance to our minority groups. Even as this proposed project is being considered, plans are in the process of preparation calling for the expenditures of further billions of dollars for urban renewal, slum clearance, and the rebuilding of the ghettos.

Annually, more and more Americans literally are being squeezed into our urban areas, and in our abortive efforts to combat the wave of crime, violence, riots, and the moral degeneration of our people which has resulted, we continue to rack our brains in an effort to determine how even more people can be accommodated in these same urban areas.

I submit that it is time that we appraise not only this problem, but our entire long-range goals and objectives with respect to the United States of the future. In so doing it is, indeed, time that we take inventory of the natural resources of today and attempt to discover the frontiers of opportunity that still remain, and to open the door to those frontiers.

Many prophets of doom have predicted the demise of rural America. May I state that such an opinion and philosophy is entirely false and is not based on sound economic foundation. For on the contrary, the very future of our country depends directly upon the revitalization of one of our most basic and important