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PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

JUNE 4, 1969

Mr. Chairman, two gentlemen from Kansas, Mr. Don Pray of Wichita, President of Mid-Arkansas Valley Development Association and Mr. Stanley F. Spencer of Arkansas City, member of the Kansas Section of the Tri-State Committee and President of the Arkansas Basin Development Association in Kansas have both presented statements to your Committee setting forth their views on project funding needs in the Arkansas River Basin in Kansas for Fiscal 1970. These men have long and dedicated careers in the field of water conservation and I heartily endorse their statements.

President Nixon's budget does not recommend funds for development of all projects listed by them, but this does not mean the need is not urgent. Pre-construction funds are badly needed for the Towanda Reservoir on the Walnut River for example. Another project which, in my opinion, justifies the appropriation of a substantial amount for construction is the El Dorado Dam. The Corps of Engineers has recommended the construction of these projects as well as one on the Little Walnut Creek near Douglas. There have been damaging floods in the Walnut Basin in recent years, one in June 1965 causing heavy damage at Augusta and El Dorado as well as to thousands of acres of fertile farm land. Again this year on two occasions, April 26 and May 22, flood waters caused considerable damage to El Dorado, necessitating the evacuation of many families from the northeast part of the city.

I have stated many times all haste must be employed in development of adequate flood control measures along that section of the Arkansas River between Great Bend, Kansas, and John Martin Dam in Colorado. This stretch of river suffered devastating floods in 1965 which drew national attention. Human lives were lost to say nothing of the incalculable losses in ruined farm land and widespread damage to private and public property. As I have indicated, it is of the utmost urgency that we proceed at the earliest possible time to construct whatever measures are recommended by the Corps of Engineers to prevent a recurrence of such losses.

I fully recognize the difficult problem the President faces in his efforts to bring inflation under control, and I support him in this objective. We must not, however, lose sight of the fact that expenditure of public funds at this time on these projects is a wise investment in our country's future. I support the President's budget recommendations for a wide range of projects throughout Kansas and, in addition, I would hope the Committee could see fit to give serious consideration to those I mentioned.

Thank you.