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## Letter from Representative Burdick to Oscar N. Berg Regarding W. G. Sloan, December 18, 1950

Usher Burdick

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December 18, 1950.

Mr. Oscar N. Berg, Executive Secretary,  
Missouri-Souris Projects Association,  
Minot, North Dakota.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The people of my section of North Dakota (the Williston area) have nothing but praise for W. G. Sloan. The Missouri Souris part of the whole Pick-Sloan plan of development of the Upper Missouri Valley water use should have been made the whole plan of this development.

In the Sloan Plan, no damage is done to anyone and it could create all the power which the people of the Northwest will ever use; provide irrigation without the destruction of more good acres than the project would serve.

Like most legislation in Congress, the act creating the Pick-Sloan plan was a compromise by Congress.

The Plan of the Army Engineers asking for a reservoir of 17,000,000 acre-feet was agreed to; navigation and flood control were to be primarily under the Engineers, while irrigation and power development were to be the concern of the Bureau of Reclamation. The appropriations for the two plans were to be equal in amount; if any changes in the plans were to be suggested, that should be done by the authority of the InterAgency Committee, of which Mr. Sloan was a member. We had high hopes of a unified plan.

No sooner had this venture been put on paper than the Army Engineers rejected their own plan for a reservoir of 17 million acre-feet and, contrary to all law, determined to increase the pool to 23 million acre-feet. That is the present intention of the Engineers.

No sooner had the unified plan begun to take shape than the Army Engineers went right back into the irrigation business as they had first proposed—against the plan they had signed which would leave this to the Bureau of Reclama-



O. N. B. # 2.

tion. The Army Engineers in this unified plan had no authority over the diversion of water, but now they have a plan--not authorized by law--to take water from the Garrison Dam and ditch it over to the Devils Lake area. The Sloan Plan contains this same objective--to divert the waters down the Souris, through Minot, and on to the Devils Lake area by gravity. At the present moment, we have two ditches going to the Devils Lake area, when one is sufficient and there isn't water enough in the Missouri for either two diversion projects or two irrigation systems.

In all this misunderstanding and high-handed assumption of power by the Army Engineers, Mr. Sloan has stood his ground and has testified more than once that no agreement has ever been reached with his consent to change the original Pick-Sloan plan, as approved by Congress.

The Sloan Plan is so simple, so much needed, and without damage to land owners, that its construction should not be delayed. That plan fills, without irreparable damage, the needs of the people in that area.

We have learned in the past few months that hydro-electric power can be produced cheaper by steam power than it can in dams and even the dam-power development will have to be implemented by steam power, to cover certain periods of the year.

Mr. Sloan has always had a clear picture of what was needed, and the right way to do the job, and I cannot say too much for him. While a Member of Congress and after I am out, he will continue to have my loyal support.

Sincerely,

Usher L. Burdick, m.c.