



5-3-1949

## Letter from Representative Burdick to William Murray Regarding Garrison Dam Pool Level, May 3, 1949

Usher L. Burdick  
*United States House of Representatives*

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/burdick-papers>

---

### Recommended Citation

Burdick, Usher L., "Letter from Representative Burdick to William Murray Regarding Garrison Dam Pool Level, May 3, 1949" (1949). *Usher Burdick Papers*. 426.  
<https://commons.und.edu/burdick-papers/426>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Usher Burdick Papers by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [und.common@library.und.edu](mailto:und.common@library.und.edu).

May 3, 1949.

Mr. William S. Murray,  
Attorney-at-Law,  
Suite 10-10A-11 Knowles Bldg.,  
Bismarck, North Dakota.

Dear Bill:

In answering your letter, I wish to say that I will make no conclusions but will state the facts. If you had done the same—stated facts and not conclusions, no reply would be necessary.

In the second paragraph of your letter, you conclude that the 1850 foot level is necessary, without the slightest reference to the facts.

Paragraph three is a gross conclusion, founded on no facts at all.

The testimony of the Bureau of Reclamation is that all the power which the people of the North Dakota area can use can be generated without a dam at all, and the testimony further is that an 1830 foot level will generate all the power North Dakota can ever use.

The fourth paragraph answers itself when you know the facts in reference to paragraphs one, two, and three.

I have made no statement that the people of North Dakota favor my ideas about the dam. I do not know how the people generally stand.

The last paragraph of your letter is wholly uncalled for. You know I introduced the first bill in Congress for the M. V. A. and that the project is in an impasse in both houses and has been for several



W. S. M. # 2.

years because of the power lobby.

If you will do me the honor of reading my brief on the subject, I think you will have some other conclusions to make.

That answers your letter, and now let me indulge in a few conclusions:

No part of the development project will be curtailed by a dam of 1830 feet. This is based on: the testimony of the Engineers that flood control and navigation can be provided with a low-water level. Power can be developed, according to the testimony of the Bureau of Reclamation, in sufficient amounts to supply the surrounding territory, by a low level.

There remains just one other reason for a high dam, according to the testimony of the Engineers, and that is that water can be diverted to Devils Lake and a lot of irrigation done. If you will read the law set out in this brief, you will see that the Missouri-Souris provides water for the Devils Lake area, and plenty of it, and FOR IRRIGATION.

Why not build the dam as the law provides?

You speak of a small community at Williston being damaged. You are absolutely hopeless if you hold these views. Not only the City of Williston, but four irrigation plants as well will be wiped out (40,000 acres of producing lands now under water), and you will destroy 90,000 more acres of the best lands in the Williston area and wipe a city of 10,000 people off the map—for some benefits to you. Please let me know what benefits you will get from this high dam—that will help your town or any other section of North Dakota.

What benefits does the Bismarck area expect to get from a high dam that they will not get from a low dam? You started this and you ought to know—just name them.

Now then, I welcome criticism, especially from my friends, but if you hold these views there must be some reason for it.

Sincerely,

Usher L. Burdick, m.c.