

September 21, 1944

[Message To Congress: Missouri River States Committee]

RECORDS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

RECORD GROUP 13

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

OF SEPTEMBER 21, 1944

RELATING TO

MISSOURI RIVER STATES COMMITTEE

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

I enclose a copy of a resolution adopted by all but one of the Missouri River States, represented in a recent meeting of their Governors and the members of the Missouri River States Committee. In general, the resolution asks for executive and legislative action toward procuring a single, coordinated plan for the development of the Missouri River basin "for the greatest benefit of its citizens both present and future, and for the greatest benefit to the United States."

As the Congress knows, I have for many years advocated the establishment of separate Authorities to deal with the development of certain river basins where several States were involved. The general functions and purposes of the Tennessee Valley Authority might well serve as a pattern for similar developments of other river basins. The Tennessee Valley Authority was charged by the Congress with the development of practically all of the factors which are important in establishing better living standards and a better life for the people throughout that great watershed.

The benefits which have resulted in the Tennessee River Valley include flood prevention, irrigation, increased electric power for farms and shops and homes and industries, better transportation on land and water, reforestation and conservation of natural resources, the encouragement of small businesses and the growth and expansion of new businesses, development and wide-spread use of fertilizers and improved agricultural methods, better education and recreational facilities -- and many kindred improvements which go to make for increased security and greater human happiness.

The Congress has at all times retained the final authority over the Tennessee Valley Authority, for the Authority comes before the Congress each year to obtain appropriations to continue its work and carry out its plans.

I have heretofore suggested the creation of a similar Authority for the development of the Arkansas River watershed from the Mississippi all the way west to its source in Colorado.

I have also suggested the creation of an Authority to render a similar service in the Columbia River watershed, including the States of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana.

I now make a similar recommendation for the Missouri River basin.

The resolution very properly asks that the legislation dealing with matters relating to the waters of the Missouri River basin recognize that it is dealing with one river and one problem; and points out the necessity of a comprehensive development of the Missouri River, indicating that there can be no piecemeal legislative program. The resolution asks that "the Congress should recognize now the problem in its entirety as it affects the people of the Missouri basin and their economic destiny and that of the United States."

I am in hearty accord with these principles. I hope that the Congress will give careful and early consideration to the creation of this federal authority to consider the problem in its entirety, remembering always that any appropriations to carry out any plan are and will be within the complete control of the Congress, and that the interest of each of the States in the basin will, of

course, be given full consideration. I am sure that none of the States in the Tennessee River basin have lost any of their rights because of the creation of the Authority in that valley.

May I also ask that renewed consideration be given to a study of the Arkansas and Columbia River basins? The fact has been established that such legislation can do much to promote the welfare of the great mass of citizens who live there — as well as their fellow citizens throughout the United States.

I need hardly point out to the Congress, in addition, how helpful this legislation will be in the creation of employment and in the stimulation of industry, business, and agriculture throughout the areas involved, in the days which will follow the end of the war.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

THE WHITE HOUSE,

September 2, 1954