

By the Kansas Historical Society

Merchants Speak in Favor of the Dam

Between 1945 and 1953 Congressman Albert Cole represented the U.S. congressional district that included the area of Tuttle Creek Dam. His district also included Topeka and Lawrence where floods had done a great deal of damage. Congressman Cole received many letters both in support and in opposition to the construction of Tuttle Creek Dam.

The following letters are from the North Topeka Merchants Association and the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce. Both cities suffered greatly in the 1951 flood.

The North Topeka Merchants Association North Topeka, Kansas

February 20, 1948

J.F. FERNSTROM, SECRETARY
PHONE 2-2237
835 NORTH KANSAS AVENUE

Honorable Albert Cole,
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

We are sending the bearer, John Fernstrom, with a plea for your support of flood control for Topeka as embraced in the comprehensive plan offered by the Army Engineers.

While we appreciate the opposition of those who would be adversely affected by the installation of the Tuttle Creek Dam we take a position of the greatest good for the greatest number of your constituents. Aside from the subjective value, which to them is dear, they would be compensated for their loss. We have recovered neither money nor morale from past floods nor could we in the future. This does not include the too often forgotten injury and loss of life, which is irreparable.

Mr. Fernstrom has long been an active crusader for maximum protection against flood and at the instance of the residents of this area. The North Topeka Merchants Association made it possible for him to make a personal appeal on our behalf.

He is adequately equipped as a student of this problem to supply you verbally with details too voluminous to be contained here.

Relative to the so-called Soldier Creek cut-off west of Topeka, we recognize this as a necessity to our local protection. Studies, surveys and recommendations of the Army Engineers have our approval and we are satisfied that the reasons for objections raised by those in the sparsely settled vicinity are not born out in the competent judgment of the engineers.

Mr. Fernstrom was not provided with petitions. However, the aroused residents of the flood potential land north of the Kaw can furnish ample opinion of this nature if you so elect.

Sincerely Yours
The North Topeka Merchants Ass'n

H.K. Harper, President

November 11, 1947

Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, U.S. Army
Room 1336, Building T-7, Gravelly Point
Washington, D.C.

Gentlemen:

WHEREAS, during the past ten years the Army Engineers have developed a comprehensive flood control plan for the Kansas River valley, and

WHEREAS, numerous hearings in various towns within the valley have made it possible for all interested parties to make known their views, and

WHEREAS, there have been some changes and alterations made to meet local objections that have not lessened the effectiveness of the over-all flood protection objective, and

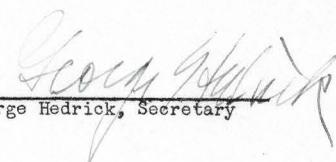
WHEREAS, there have been flood losses in the Kansas River valley amounting to millions of dollars, thus causing a constant threat to our economic welfare, we urge the early approval of the plan by the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, U.S. Army, for the following reasons:

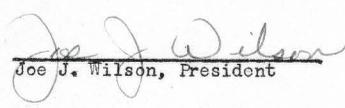
1. We believe that the proposed flood control dams will largely eliminate floods in the lower Kaw valley, thus minimizing the need for dikes and other local construction.
2. Thousands of acres of highly productive Kaw valley lands and industrial properties will be protected from floods.
3. Flood control reservoirs will provide a more stable and uniform flow of water in the Kansas River, insuring a more healthful supply for municipal and industrial use.
4. Specifically, the Tuttle Creek, Milford, and Perry reservoirs are of prime importance to this part of the valley; water from the streams on which they are located has caused serious damage in the lower valley many times.
5. Floods have, on several occasions, seriously interfered with transcontinental rail traffic on three of the nation's leading lines that pass through the Kaw River valley.
6. A proposed expansion of the agricultural interests in the lower valley will greatly increase food production by making possible the growing of three and four crops per season.

THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce, acting upon the recommendation of its Flood Control Committee, desires to endorse the proposed plans and urges the early completion of the necessary dams and other flood control works.

Respectfully submitted,

LAWRENCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE


George Hedrick, Secretary


Joe J. Wilson, President

NOV 17 1947

