

- 12 -

42. In the course of discussion it was stated that it would not be satisfactory to select a single contractor and discuss terms of the contract with him, as it would not be possible to justify such action on the basis of a principle such as the one that the Cabinet had in mind in its decision of February 26th.

43. The Cabinet agreed:

(a) that the proposal that a single contractor be approached with a view to arriving at a contract for the reconstruction of the Library of Parliament be not approved; and,

(b) that the Minister of Public Works communicate in writing with contractors coming within the terms of the decision of February 26th, 1953, to secure proposals as to arrangements under which they would be prepared to undertake the renovation of the Library of Parliament in accordance with the principles then agreed on.

South Saskatchewan River project

44. The Minister of Agriculture, referring to discussion at the meeting of January 16th, said it was desirable to consider what position the government would take about the South Saskatchewan River project now that the report of the Royal Commission had been received.

The Commission had recommended that attention be concentrated on smaller projects. A great many of these had been carried on over many years and the present problem arose because it had been decided a few years back that some of the larger projects ought to be taken in hand. Four large irrigation projects had been considered possible: one in the vicinity of Lethbridge, one along the Bow River, one on the Red Deer River and the fourth on the South Saskatchewan River. The first **three** had received attention. The last had been considered very carefully over many years and the opinion of qualified people, taking into account the report of the Royal Commission, was that it could be carried out successfully and result in substantial benefits for the whole area. The South Saskatchewan project was one which might be considered under the terms of Order in Council P.C. 2298 of June 19th, 1947 and discussion might proceed between the Federal and provincial governments as to action that might be taken.

While 455,000 acres could be irrigated altogether under the project, it was probable that for a considerable time irrigation would not extend beyond the 200,000 acres on which water could be put by gravity. The best use of such irrigated land would probably be for the raising of cattle. All the uses and benefits of the lake that would be created, 145 miles long in the centre of Saskatchewan, could not be foreseen but it would make a substantial difference to the development of the area.

An explanatory memorandum was circulated.

(Minister's memorandum, March 19, 1953 - Cab. Doc. 80-53).

000040

RG 2, A5a,
Vol. 2652

Privy Council Office
Bureau du Conseil privé

National Archives of Canada
Archives nationales du Canada