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OPENING OF GARDINER DAM

The following is an address by Prime Minister L.B. Pearson at the opening of the Gardiner Dam Outlook, Saskatchewan, on July 21:

The creation of the Gardiner Dam and the formation of Lake Diefenbaker results from a great effort in co-operation for the good of Saskatchewan and therefore for the good of Canada.

As such, it is a true centennial project. Without the constructive co-operation of government, federal and provincial, the conception could never have been realized in the great work we are officially inaugurating today.

This achievement also magnificently underlines the importance to national development of the individual with a dream. Although the idea of damming the South Saskatchewan was first mentioned 100 years ago, without the vision of the two men whose names we are formally enshrining in our history today, this accomplishment would still be no more than hope and aspiration.

So I pay tribute to the vision of the late Jimmy Gardiner, who fought for so many years to have this project undertaken, and to the vision of John Diefenbaker, who took the bold decision as the Leader of the Government that made this ceremony possible today.

PURPOSE OF DAM

The purpose of this project is well known: to make better use of the water resources in this river through irrigation, power, flood control, urban and industrial water supply and recreation. The achievement of some of these purposes will be without much difficulty but others, such as irrigation, will present problems which, however, I am certain can be solved.

It will be used in the beginning to irrigate an area of 40,000 acres, but this can be extended in time to some 200,000 acres, and perhaps considerably more with improvements in irrigation technology. The first power from the dam will be generated in 1968, and when the plant is completed, 800 million kilowatt-hours of electricity will be available in an average year - more than a third of the total power generated by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation in 1963. Control of the river will also greatly improve the economics of developing hydro-power sites downstream from the main dam.

These are some of the economic benefits. But among the most exciting things about the whole project is the creation of the lake, 140 miles long, with a shoreline of nearly 500 miles. This will provide a vast new recreation resource within easy reach of half of the population of Saskatchewan. It will do much for the life of this province.

UNLIMITED BENEFITS

But the interest in the South Saskatchewan River is, of course, not limited to the Province of Saskatchewan. The sources of this great Prairie river are the glaciers left behind from the last ice age and the winter snows along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta. The tributaries of the South Saskatchewan serve all the major cities of Alberta and many smaller communities in that province. These waters are also of vital importance to the communities they serve in Manitoba, on their way to Lake Winnipeg.

In a very real sense, this dam and the resulting Lake is another example of co-operative federalism at its best. Through the federal contribution to the