

might be imposed by the international situation. It might be well to defer decision pending consultation with the Minister of Agriculture.

21. The Cabinet, after discussion, agreed that the question of construction of a Science Service Laboratory for the Department of Agriculture at Kentville, N.S., be deferred pending return of the Minister of Agriculture.

Federal-provincial relations; flood control, Thames River; forest conservation

22. The Minister of Trade and Commerce reported that the Premier of Ontario had proposed that the Federal Government bear 37½ per cent of the costs of proposed flood control measures for the Thames River. Another 37½ per cent would be borne by the Province and the remaining 25 per cent by the municipalities concerned. The proposed expenditures for the Federal Government would amount to \$4 million, over a period of three years.

23. The Prime Minister said that the Fraser River flood appeared to have created a precedent that, where an emergency was beyond the means of local authorities, the Federal Government would share in repairing the damage and in taking steps to prevent recurrence. If serious floods were to occur and the Federal Government had refused to participate in preventive measures, the position would be most difficult. The cost involved in the present case would represent only a small part of the expenditures the Government might be required to make if no preventive measures were taken and serious damage resulted.

24. The Minister of National Health and Welfare said that very extensive damage had been caused by floods in the Thames Valley on several previous occasions. However, it might be well to defer action until the Federal-Provincial Conference when a more definite formula could perhaps be worked out to govern federal participation in measures of this kind.

25. The Secretary of State for External Affairs suggested that, while there had been numerous previous floods in the Thames Valley, at no time had they been considered a national disaster requiring federal assistance. Federal participation in flood control measures in this case might open the way for any number of similar demands for other areas.

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