

Repayment Commission Issues Reclamation Report To Solons

Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes has transmitted to the Congress the report of the special Reclamation Commission on Federal and Indian reclamation projects.

The report gives a resume of the accomplishments of reclamation in the West as well as a review of the problems that have arisen in the development of irrigated land. Data were collected not only at 72 oral hearings on the projects, but also from reports, questionnaire surveys and official and private records.

Annually, the irrigation projects of the West purchase more than \$200,000,000 worth of goods from 31 eastern states outside the reclamation area, the Commission stated. On eleven of the Federal projects hydroelectric power plants have been installed which provide cheap power for pumping, and a surplus has been sold in and around the projects, to the benefit of the project peoples.

Major problems on Federal reclamation projects arise from the general economic conditions affecting the farming industry as a whole, and from certain special agricultural, irrigation, and financial problems of the individual water users, the Commission reported. The recommendations of the Commission are as follows:

1. That the Secretary of the Interior be empowered by Congress to:

(a) Reclassify lands from time to time.

(b) Suspend payment of part or all of the construction charges on low or nonproducing lands that are in the paying classes.

(c) Eliminate from future reclamation repayment contracts with water users, districts, or associations all requirements for joint or general liability and upon revision of present contracts or upon advance full payment of construction charges, release water users from joint liability.

(d) Fix a plan for repayment of construction charges, either upon an installment basis per acre or per acre foot of water delivered, or based upon ability to pay, as indicated and regulated by the average gross returns for lands of a project or a division of a project, on the basis of the percentage of the average gross acre income for the year nearest the date of payment for which the crop returns are available, scaling up or down from a basic percentage of five per cent of the average gross acre income at normal value with an increase at the rate of 1-25 of one per cent for each dollar of average annual production above the normal base and decrease at the rate of 1-3 of one per cent for each dollar of average annual production below such normal base. The normal base and the installments may vary as to projects or divisions of a project. The normal base should be subject to revision from time to time by boards of adjustment appointed by the Secretary.

(e) Provide suitable plans to reward water users for the efficient use of water and to penalize water users for the waste of water.

(f) Authorize the advance payment of one or more installments of the construction charge at a discount computed on the basis of

that sum of money which when placed at interest at 4 per cent will provide sufficient revenue to pay the annual installments without interest as they become due.

In cases where the time element or amount of installment is indefinite, the Secretary of the Interior shall fix the time and the amount of the installment, and the sum to be deposited.

(g) Authorize a discount of ten per cent for the payment in full of the current annual installment of construction charges if paid on or before the due date, diminishing the percentage of discount by one per cent per month for each month or fraction thereof after the due date that said installment remains unpaid. After the time for any discount has expired, the full value of the current installment shall be collected without interest or penalty. If the installment is not paid within one year from the due date, delivery of water shall cease. The payment of all sums of money deducted as discounts under the provisions of this paragraph shall be automatically deferred to the end of the repayment period covered by the repayment contract and such deferred charges shall be paid in annual installments as provided in the contract, but shall not be subject to discounts herein recommended.

2. That the Secretary of the Interior be given funds to expand the program under his authority to enter into co-operative agreements with the several states acting through the State Colleges of Agriculture or other agency, for the purpose of improving the agricultural production of the project water users by giving advice and information in the selection of land, equipment and livestock, the preparation of land for irrigation, the selection of crops, methods of irrigating and general farm management, the United States to contribute such proportion of the expense as may be agreed upon.

3. That the Secretary of the Interior be authorized to appoint a board of adjustment to make a technical and economic study of project conditions, together with an audit of the financial accounts of the projects and report findings and recommendations to the Secretary when the farmers of the projects do not meet their repayment obligations or petition for a revision of their repayment contracts or whenever such survey is considered necessary by the Secretary.

4. That on projects turned over to the water users for operation and maintenance and which fail to perform their contracts the Secretary of the Interior be authorized to appoint project superintendents who are qualified by training and experience to operate and maintain project canal systems and to fix the compensation to be paid to such superintendents from the operation and maintenance funds of the project, and prescribe and enforce rules and regulations for the economical and efficient distribution and use of water.

5. That the auditing service now rendered by the Bureau of Reclamation be expanded so as to provide for annual audits of project books and for co-operation with project and district officers and water users in the solution of finan-

Land Planning

NUMEROUS SHORT BLOCKS ARE UNECONOMICAL

These sketches contrast two types of local street design—one, an example of the rigid gridiron pattern, the other functional planning that meets all requirements of local access and circulation.

Short blocks increase initial construction costs because of the large number of unnecessary cross streets, and also increase both traffic hazards and travel time through such districts. In the lower plan, better shaped lots are secured and those facing the State highway are protected by a park strip. This plan also provides a local shopping center and a school site.

cial problems and securing financial aid, all without any charge to the project or district during the time of any indebtedness to the United States.

6. That the Secretary of the Interior provide for an annual inspection of project structures with provision for making such repairs and renewals as may be necessary in order to maintain the canal system in good operating condition and cause payment therefor to be made from the operation and maintenance funds of the project.

7. That the Secretary of the Interior require a technical and economic survey of each reclamation project with data concerning the lands, crops, farm management, irrigation methods, marketing and general economic and financial conditions, including taxes and mortgage debt, and other pertinent matters at least every five years, with recommendations for improvements based on the findings of such survey.

8. That the Secretary of the Interior be authorized to make necessary rules and regulations to govern boards, officers and employees in hearing complaints and making adjustments with the right of appeal to the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation and to the Secretary.

1000 Horses To Parade In Fete

A record assembly of a thousand horses will be entered in a mammoth parade reviewing the colorful history of San Joaquin Valley from 1771 to the present at the tenth annual rodeo and fiesta at Visalia, June 2 to 5.

Gaily-attired caballeros, señoritas, soldiers, vanqueros, miners and modern cowboys will appear in the four-mile line of march, according to the Visalia district office of the Automobile Club of Southern California.

Street entertainment, aerial spectacles, society horse-show, and whiskerino contest will highlight the affair. Night rodeo events will be staged June 3 and 4 and afternoon contests on June 4 and 5.

9. To insure the development and carrying on of the Reclamation program of the United States, and safeguard the public and private funds invested in Federal reclamation projects, the services herein recommended by the Commission should be at Federal expense and not reimbursable.