

of the Secretary as to whether or not—not as to, but whether or not section 602 is part of the legislation?

Secretary UDALL. If section 602 is part of the legislation, we have to implement it and carry it out.

Mr. ASPINALL. You will do your best to carry it out within the time period that I suggested?

Secretary UDALL. That is my statement.

Mr. ASPINALL. Mr. Secretary, I am interested in your estimates of water that can be salvaged through conservation programs.

Does the Department presently have authority to carry out all the measures listed in your statement?

Secretary UDALL. We think that additional, specific authority would be helpful. We would need additional authorization, if, in addition to the items I listed, we are going to line the Imperial Canal. I think we have to be water-saving conscious. I think we can save substantial amounts of water, but there will be major investments and I think we all are going to find that we have an interest in conservation, particularly in the lower basin, where the present losses are high.

Mr. ASPINALL. I think that I would be in agreement with what you state, but of course, we have in H.R. 3300 a provision which would authorize the expenditure of \$42 million for this purpose.

That is still your figure; is it not?

Mr. DOMINY. That is substantially right; yes, sir.

Mr. ASPINALL. Do you not think it would be more to the—better for the operation of the Department if we placed this in this bill and came right out in the open and said what we have in mind rather than trying to hide a part of the cost of this project?

Secretary UDALL. I am all for writing a straightforward bill. I am also for water conversation. I do not see any objection to doing what you propose.

Mr. ASPINALL. Mr. Secretary, I have an opportunity to go briefly through the reconnaissance report on augmentation of the Colorado River—by desalting of sea water. And I want to tell you frankly that I have very little confidence in the cost estimate that the Department comes up with in the report. The estimate of 9.8 cents per thousand gallons for desalting, even though the report says that this is based upon 1995 technology, is in my opinion completely unrealistic and without foundation. As far as I know, there is no existing information on desalting technology which will justify this optimistic estimate.

Mr. Chairman, inasmuch as this report has been forwarded to us and it comes about under authority given to the Secretary, I ask that this report be made a part of the record at this place.

Mr. JOHNSON. You have heard the request of the gentleman from Colorado.

Is there objection?

Mr. SAYLOR. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Chairman, I will not object with the understanding that we will be permitted to question the Secretary of the Interior with regard to this report.

Mr. ASPINALL. I am not going to question the Secretary very much further on this report, but I think my colleagues have that right.

Mr. SAYLOR. I withdraw my reservation.

Mr. JOHNSON. It will be done.

(The material referred to follows:)