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DRAFT MEMORANDUM
ON JORDAN PROJECT

Following the Memorandum submitted by the Israel Ambassador on the 2nd April, 1958, relative to the diversion of the Jordan and the Yarmuk Rivers for exploitation in the region, and following the State Department's Memorandum to us dated, we hereby have the honour to submit our application for financial assistance in the realization of the Jordan Project.

Consideration of the water supply position in the State of Israel in recent years and the needs for further development, in the near and in the more distant future, place the Project for conveying water from the Jordan to the southern parts of the country in a position of high priority.

In the ten years since the establishment of the State, Israel's population has increased from 780,000 to 2 million and the country's agricultural development has resulted in an expansion of the irrigated area from 250,000 dunams in 1948 to about 1.5 million dunams in the last year, namely in a six-fold increase.

It was natural in the initial stages of irrigated agriculture to develop lands in the zones where water was easy to come by. Accordingly, the groundwater of the Coastal Plain has undergone development to a large scale and, at the same time, the continuous river and spring flows in the West and the South of the country have been drawn upon. However, the position is now rapidly approaching in all but a few isolated areas, where in a very few years development of all these, more easily exploitable resources, would be completed.

These prospects point to the necessity to supply the additional amounts that will be required for the existing agricultural settlements by introducing water from outside the respective districts. Such additional supplies will be needed even if the supply to new agricultural settlements is not considered, since the growth of existing plantations, the increase of rural populations, the development of livestock economy and municipal expansion all demand the timely importation of additional water from the North of Israel.

This applies especially to the Central and Southern Districts of Israel, which hold some 75% of the population as well as 70% of all the lands suitable for irrigation. Even after all remaining local resources are fully developed, the resulting amounts will fall short of meeting the growing needs of agriculture and industry beyond what will be required within the next 2 - 3 years.

Having examined the whole position in detail, the Government of Israel finds it necessary to implement the Jordan Project at an accelerated pace, with the intention of completing during the next four years Stage One of the Project, which will provide for the conveyance of 150 to 180 million cubic metres per annum from Lake Tiberias to the headworks of the Yarkon-Negev lines, for easing the shortage in the Central and SOUTHERN Districts.

The Project, as proposed for execution, has evolved from detailed investigations carried out over a period of 15 years. A number of outstanding American engineers have participated in its elaboration and the Project has been reviewed and approved by the Supreme Consulting Board for Water Development of the State of Israel, headed by Prof. Abel Wolman of Johns Hopkins University and including Mr. H.W. Bashore - former Commissioner of Reclamation, Mr. J. Hammond - former Head of the Dam Design Section, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Mr. Samuel B. Morris - former General Manager of the Los Angeles Power and Water Department and Dr. John L. Savage - former Chief Design Engineer, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

A considerable number of planning and design reports have been compiled over the years, and the design of most features intended for early construction is either completed or well in hand.

The appended "General Report" gives a summarized description of the Project and details the investments involved and their distribution in time.

As far as the physical possibility and engineering preparations are concerned, it is possible to execute the work during the said four years with an investment of IL.160 million which includes IL. 61.3 million in hard currency.

Up to the present, the sum of about IL.20 million has been invested; the programme for 1959/60 (the first of the said four years) calls for a further investment of IL.34 million including IL.16.5 million in hard currency and which, together with advances needed for the 1960/61 construction year, requires a total financial outlay of IL. 37 millio including IL. 20 million in hard currency.

In the State Department's Memorandum handed to the Israel Ambassador in Washington on the, the interest of the United States of America is expressed in economically sound projects which involve the development of water resources in Israel lying within the armistice lines and which do not fonflict with coordinated development of the Jordan River system and established international obligations. The said Memorandum also stipulates that the amounts of water on which such projects can be based, should be within the limits of the Johnston tentative allocation.

In appreciation of this attitude and, in order to obviate the risk of renewed international tension in the near future over the diversion of the Jordan, the Government of Israel has decided to base the Jordan Project during the said Stage One on water taken from Lake Tiberias.

Pumping from the Lake offers at this stage also a number of engineering advantages arising from the high quality of the water and which will result in considerable savings at the consuming end of the Project.

Furthermore, in the initial stage, and up to a certain amount of flow, the pumping proposition does not compare unfavourable with the upper diversion as far as annual costs are concerned.

From the political aspect, pumping from Lake Tiberias does away with all the problems involved in the diversion at Benot Ya-Aqov Bridge, while taking the water in Stage One from the Lake will leave the decision open regarding the choice of the ultimate point of diversion. In due time, the question can be re-examined in the light of the situation that may by then develop. In this connection, it is possible to point out a number of alternatives, obviating the need of going to Benot Ya'aqov Bridge even at the final stage and thus keeping away from the Demilitarized Zone, while offering a considerable economic advantage over pumping from Lake Tiberias when the full capacity of the Project is called into service.

In the light of the contents of the State Department's said Memorandum and of the intimations made on various occasions by the Secretary of State and senior officers of the U.S. Government, it is understood that favourable consideration will be given to a request for U.S. assistance in the execution of the Jordan Project by the State of Israel.

We hereby apply for financial assistance in carrying out this important Project, Whose programme will call in the budget year of 1959/60 (April to April) for an expenditure of IL. 37 million and which includes hard currency in the amount of IL. 20 million.

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In a connection with the execution of the Jordan Project we take this opportunity to refer to the problem of encroachment upon present Israeli uses which will result, in our opinion, from the implementation of the Yarmuk Project now under active construction by the Kingdom of Jordan with the assistance of the U.S.A. Government. In pursuance of our memoranda of andwe wish to repeat our request that specific steps be agreed upon to safeguard these uses in their present form, or if that should prove unfeasible without abandoning the said Yarmuk Project, that an alternative solution be agreed upon to the satisfaction of the parties concerned.