

WATER AUTHORITY PROJECTS, OPERATIONS DESCRIBED

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[Article: "Water Authority Chairman Says in Interview: We Aspire to Convey Water and Sewers to All Population Centers"]

[Text] Amman--Engineer Muhammad al-Kaylani, the Water Authority chairman, has said that the ambitions of the Water Authority center on conveying water daily to all population centers, on abolishing the system of turns currently in place and to give priority first to the population centers in the semi-desert and then to the rural and urban inhabitants.

In an exclusive interview with AL-RA'Y, Engineer al-Kaylani said: Our ambitions are focused in preparing a major working plan to convey water to the kingdom's cities and to population centers with more than 3,000 inhabitants each, according to the latest census conducted in Jordan in 1979. The plan will be studied this year. The construction of sewer networks will begin according to importance and on the basis of what the study demonstrates.

A detailed study will also be conducted on building sewer networks in the northern and southern al-Azraq, in al-Hashimiyah, al-Sukhnah, Abu 'Alandah, Jawah, al-Juwayyidah, Sahab, al-Fuhays, Mahis and Na'ur. Bids will be invited for the construction of these networks and of the treatment plants attached to them in 1985.

Answering a question on [sewage] treatment plants in Jordan, Engineer al-Kaylani said that a detailed study is being currently conducted on the treatment plants and sewage networks in al-Ramtha, al-Mafraq, 'Ajlun, 'Anjarah, 'Ayn Janna, Kufrinjah, Ma'daba, al-Karak, al-Tafilah and Ma'an. Bids for these projects will be invited next year.

Studies are also being currently conducted on building treatment plants for al-Baq'ah area sewers which serve al-Buq'ah camp, 'Ayn al-Basha, Safut and Suwaylih, as well as on a treatment plant for Wadi al-Sir which includes the town of Wadi al-Sir and a part of the nearby fields. Bids for this project will be invited at the beginning of 1985.

Regarding how the water situation in Jordan will be in the summer, especially in wake of the drought, Engineer al-Kaylani said that the situation is very reassuring. I can assure every citizen regarding the water situation next summer. The pumping of water will not be affected. Rather, it will improve further. The underground water stores are very reassuring, despite the drought.

He added that the Water Authority has completed transforming the water pumping process from intermittent pumping to permanent daily pumping in the city of al-Salt. A study is currently underway to transform the pumping in Irbid city to permanent pumping. This will be done in 2 months. Studies are also currently underway to evaluate the underground and surface water resources in all parts of the kingdom. The evaluation is being made now in the northern part of the kingdom and the study will be expanded to include all parts of Jordan.

Answering a question on the water bill, Engineer al-Kaylani noted that the current water tariff is no more than some sort of a control or a safety valve to curb the meaningless waste of water. The purpose of this tariff is not commercial because the Authority deals with services and has no commercial objective. The water revenues do no more than cover some of the authority's recurrent expenses. I can assure you that 95 percent of the citizens have no complaint about the water bill. There are more than 200,000 subscribers in the kingdom, 75,000 of them in the capital. As for the complaints we receive, most of them are either because of the accumulation of water bills or because of a break resulting in the wasteful leakage of water. As for breaks occurring in the water meters, the authority does its duty in this regard and repairs such meters. The authority also reassesses the readings in a bill in case any flaw is found in the meter. I can ascertain that the authority's main interest insofar as the issue of water is concerned is focused on the popular quarters which are voicing no complaints whatsoever because their water use is very limited and because no home in these quarters pays more than 100 fils daily for water costs. This is not a financial burden.

Engineer al-Kaylani has also stated that the authority will exert efforts to electrify all the artesian wells and to terminate the use of diesel fuel on which the wells are operated now. The authority will do so with the objective of insuring a constant pumping of water throughout the 24 hours of the day. The authority will then seal the wells because there will be no need for workers to be there and because there will be no more problems.

Regarding control over the pumping of water from the wells to the plants and then to the reservoirs, Engineer al-Kaylani said: Radio equipment will be installed for this purpose. This system is currently applied in Amman, al-Salt, Yajuz and al-Qastal and will be applied in the other parts of the kingdom next year. When this equipment

is installed in the pumping plants in al-Za'tari, al-Dulayl, Hawfa, Abu Hammur and in the pumping plants in al-Karak, al-Tafilah, Ma'an, al-'Aqabah and al-Disah by the end of this year, these plants will be connected with the radio equipment in Amman.

It is worth noting that a number of engineers and technicians watch the water situation in the reservoirs and make detailed reports on this situation throughout the 24 hours of the day. Moreover, there are direct communications between them and the Water Authority chairman who is kept constantly informed of the water situation and who issues his instructions to the officials concerned via this radio equipment. [While being interviewed] Engineer al-Kaylani contacted from his office the official in charge of preparing the reports and the latter supplied him immediately with a detailed report on all the reservoirs in the capital and its suburbs.

It is to be noted that after issuance of the royal decree on the law concerning the Authority, this Authority will include within its jurisdiction the water and sewage departments previously under the control of Amman Municipality, the Drinking Water Organization, the departments concerned with water studies, drilling and irrigation in the Natural Resources Authority and some specialized departments of the Jordan Valley Authority, in addition to the water departments of the municipalities.

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