בחשובה זא להזכיר
מספר 9602-21/(רק)
תאריך 10.11.53

משרד החוץ
דאר נכנס ירושלים
11 XI 1953
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א ק ס פ ר ס

סודי בהחלט

לכבוד
שר החוץ,
משרד החוץ,
ירושלים.

אדוני השר,

הנני מעבירה רצ"ב העתקי מכתבים ששלח מר בלאס מאה'ב כדלקמן:

1. העתק מכתב מיום 2.11.53 אל חברי המועצה המיעצת על מפעל המים הארצי, ה'ה באשוד, סאבג' וזלמן;

2. העתק מכתב אל היועץ מר קוטון;

3. העתק מכתב אל מר ברוך עמיר.

בכבוד רב,

[redacted]

רחל קיסלוב
המזכירה הראשית.

רק/עב.

אל:

מאת:

ה"ב

נית מים אזורית וועדת
משנה של הכנסת.

דקנו את הדבר עם מר רוזטי,
הכנסת, ולא מצאנו שמץ של
ברי ראפל כאילו דובר באחת
המשנה של הכנסת על הכנת
מים אזורית על ידי או"ם.

בברכה,

[redacted]

ש. בנדור.

11.

חתימה | תאריך | חתימה

823-7.51-60

COPY

S. BLASS, c/o Israel Consulate-General, 11 East 70th Street, NYC

Government Adviser on Water Resources
Chairman of the Planning Committee of the All-Israel Water Scheme
Chairman of the Power Planning Committee in Israel
Director-General of "Water Planning for Israel"

November 2, 1953

The Board of Consultants on the All-Israel Water Scheme
Mr. H. W. Bashore, Mitchell, Nebraska
Dr. J. L. Savage, Denver, Colorado
Dr. A. Wolman, Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Sirs,

1. In connection with the recently-proposed "Unified Development of the Water Resources of the Jordan Valley Region" prepared at the request of the United Nations under the direction of T.V.A. by Chas. T. Main Inc., Boston, 1953, I have been directed by my Government to contact you in the capacity of the Board of Consultants on the All-Israel Water Scheme and to ask for your comments on certain vital points of the above scheme concerning Israel.

2. General Observations.

It is the declared policy of the Israel Government to participate in a Regional Water Development Scheme provided that Israel's vital national interests are secured, but the Chas. T. Main scheme does not adequately take care of these interests. I will summarize my observations as follows:

(a) Lake Tiberias

The Scheme provides for the use of Lake Tiberias as a hold-over storage reservoir. This idea was first proposed by the late J. B. Hays, who proposed to bring into the Lake all the flood waters of the Yarmuk. I believe that after a site for a dam was found at a point of high elevation in the Yarmuk basin (Maqarin site), the proposal to use Lake Tiberias lost much of its merit, the reasons being threefold: a loss of power, a loss of water, and a decrease in the quality of the water. Lake Tiberias loses much more water through evaporation than artificial lakes which have a smaller surface. Also, the water leaving Lake Tiberias will contain more chlorine

as it is known that Lake Tiberias adds 130,000 tons of chlorine yearly. Although it is possible to divert the salt springs, this would, nevertheless, require the building of a canal around Lake Tiberias, permanent pumping of these salt springs in the canal, and the loss of these spring waters.

I think the whole idea of keeping Lake Tiberias sweet should be reconsidered after the Maqarin site is found to be feasible. For the time being, however, I suppose that Lake Tiberias will be used as a major reservoir in the Regional Scheme in spite of a bigger loss of water, loss of power, and a decrease in the quality of the water.

(b) The Lost 150 Million Cubic Meters and Other Undeveloped Waters.

In view of the fact that the Scheme provides for the use of Lake Tiberias as the main reservoir, it is utterly incomprehensible how Chas. T. Main account for the loss of an additional 150 million c.m. (See page 48 of the Report).- The Report also states that 163 million c.m. (page 24) of flood flow and other flows are not taken into account. I believe that modern techniques can make use of these waters, especially in regions where water should also be used in winter (for winter crops), and that short-time storage could be provided at least for a part of these waters.

(c) Water Duty.

Page 8 of the Report gives the water duties allocated. For the first five areas located in Israel the water duty is too high, with the exception of the Upper Huleh. I believe that such big quantities of water will not produce the most food and that it is much more economical to spread the water over wider areas. As to the Ghor areas (Jordan Valley), it is my strong belief that, if the water allocated will actually be used, many parts of these areas which are now salty will turn into swamps after their reclamation.

There is justification for allocating more water for the Jordan Valley than to the northern Israel areas, but it is quite peculiar that the project allocates 1,500 c.m. per dunam to the Yarmuk plateau for the Syrians, while only 770 c.m. are allocated to the Huleh, 930 c.m. to the Yavniel Valley (which is mostly below sea level), and 930 c.m. to the Affule Beit Alpha area, which also lies mostly below sea level. (The end of this area is almost 100 meters below sea level.)

(d) Negev Not Included.

It is a well-known axiom that without the development of the Negev, Israel cannot prosper. Nevertheless, the Scheme ignores the vital needs of Israel and allocates only 32½% of the waters in the Jordan Valley to Israel.

(e) Litani River Not Included.

It is curious that the Report did not include the Litani River, which has mostly no irrigation task in the Lebanon itself. The present plan for the development of the Litani provides for the creation of power and for most of the water to continue to flow into the Mediterranean Sea. In view of the fact that the Report neglects some hundred million c.m. from the resources of the Jordan Valley itself, and allocates too high a water duty, it should at least introduce the Litani River into the Regional Scheme, instead of robbing the "poor man's lamb".

(f) The Hydro-Electric Power Scheme Gesher B'not Yaakov - Lake Tiberias.

The hydro-electric power scheme now under construction, which calls for the diversion of a part of the Jordan water leaving the Huleh, carrying it a distance of a few miles in a canal, and then dropping the water down to Lake Tiberias, was discussed many times over and was found to be a very attractive economic scheme which would enable Israel to save a considerable amount of the foreign currency now expended on the import of oil for power. According to our original scheme, the machinery in the power house will produce electric power only for a 20-year period, as long as the main canal from the sources of the Jordan does not divert the water to the Beit Natufa Reservoir. At the end of this period, the machinery, penstock and the operating pool, with some adjustments, will function as a power storage facility. But in the scheme of Chas. T. Main, if adopted, or any other scheme which makes Lake Tiberias the main reservoir for the Ghor lands, using a big part of Huleh or Litani waters, the hydro-electric power scheme mentioned above would be incorporated as an integral part of the larger scheme and provide electric power permanently, which makes it even more attractive than in our national scheme. In any case, this hydro-electric power scheme does not interfere with the proposed Chas. T. Main scheme.

3. It will be of vital importance for my Government to obtain your views on the following three questions:

A) Provided that most of the water of the Litani River is not usable for irrigation in Lebanon itself,

would the introduction of the Litani waters in the Jordan Valley area be a feasible undertaking from an economic and engineering point of view?

B) Is not the development of the Negev a vital issue for Israel, and is not the scheme to bring Jordan water to the Negev a technically and economically feasible undertaking for Israel?

C) Does the scheme now under construction, of diversion of a part of the Jordan waters into a canal and dropping the water down to Lake Tiberias, interfere with the Chas. T. Main Scheme or with any other scheme which makes Lake Tiberias a main reservoir for irrigation of the Jordan Valley lands?

It will be very much appreciated if an answer to the above could be given as soon as possible.

I have sent the Chas. T. Main Scheme together with a copy of this letter to Mr. J. S. Cotton and have asked him to analyse the factual material and send his comments on to you.

Very respectfully yours,

SB/SR

S. Blass

cc: Mr. J. S. Cotton.