

AMB. JOHNSTON:

Mr. Prime Minister, Gentlemen, if you don't object, the technical details of this we want to study and I would suggest that we have some time to do so and perhaps discuss it further with Mr. Wiener. I would like to reply to this paper briefly. Let me make several points to you.

I think that there is a feeling that the use of Lake Tiberias—and I want to speak very frankly—that there is some type of Machiavellian scheme that through the use of Lake Tiberias that a part of the sovereignty of Israel over the Lake will be obstructed. If I can make myself entirely clear, let me assure you there is no such program. The President of the U.S. personally, Mr. Prime Minister, has given me very wide latitude on this subject. I am his mouthpiece in this area. He has sent me no instructions since I have arrived; nor do I expect any on my entire trip, because he has given me wide latitude as to what I can do. The only thing is that it must be an economical scheme that he can recommend to the Congress; one which will justify the scrutiny of engineers.

Now, I could give you a letter as the voice of the President of the U.S., if you wish, in which it would state unequivocally and completely clearly that the U.S. has no interest in, no desire for, any control ~~at~~ over Lake Tiberias or desire to use the Lake in any form, shape, manner as a future leverage on Israel. If such a letter from me is not satisfactory, the President of the U.S. at my request would be glad to write such a letter. So there can be no question in any form, shape, or manner, and as I say it as broadly and strongly as possible that the U.S. has any interests whatsoever in Lake Tiberias, any Machiavellian scheme or ulterior motive, except to have a system which is the most efficient.

The second thing I would like to state: there must be some type of water control or master. You can write your own ticket on that. The only thing we are interested in is that the water is delivered as agreed. That is all we are interested in. There is no other program. I made a suggestion of a method whereby each state would choose the people and be responsible. I am not sure you are familiar with that suggestion,

Mr. Prime Minister. That was a suggestion. You might have other ideas, which we are perfectly willing to buy if suitable.

The third thing I would like to mention is this: you are very sure that there is ground water in the Jordan. We think there is too. The quantity can be in dispute. We are very willing to write into, or attempt to write into the Jordanian agreement that the ground waters secured from our intensive survey--and you can tell us where you would like to have us drill--such ground waters would be deducted from the Lake. We would be glad to write that into the agreement so that there will be no question as to what will happen or that it is up to a water master or anyone else to allocate these waters.

Now, we have only suggested Lake Tiberias as a ~~XXXXXX~~ storage. Personally, I wish we could avoid it. It is very difficult to sell it to the Arabs. I am going to have to use all the minor abilities that I have to try to do it and I am not sure I can do it, but it is the only way we know where you can save all the waters of the system. I don't care whether you waste ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ one MCM or 125 MCM, but we can't justify the wasting of any water in principle when the water is so badly needed. I do not agree, or the engineers do not agree, with the figures here in any form, shape or manner, and we think we can tell you why. In our opinion it will be far more than indicated here. Incidentally, it might be of interest to you to know that we have attempted to figure out the cost of storing water beyond 118 MCM on the Yarmuk and it will run up to from \$2,000 to \$6,000 an acre just for the storage of water after you reach a certain height--certainly a program that the President of the U.S. could not recommend in any conscience, and even Mr. Blass or Mr. Wiener in their most ardent desire to irrigate would not want to pay that amount, \$6,000, just to store. So our only desire to use Lake Tiberias was because it was a natural reservoir and the cheapest and best way to use it and it is a place which all people have recommended. If you will get me the Cotton report, every single report, Mr. Prime Minister, of every engineer who has been in the area has recommended the storage at Lake Tiberias. The Cotton report in several places recommends it, because of the

"large storage capacity and location, it is an ideal reservoir site for water allocated to the lower Jordanian valley," especially for the Yarmuk River. And on Page 83, he says, forgetting the technical details, "It is not necessary to raise the level of the Lake." Mr. Wiener quotes widely from Mr. Cotton and takes him almost as a Bible, and there it is written in Mr. Cotton's report, "It is not necessary to raise the level of Lake Tiberias in order to store. It would not be necessary to raise the level of Lake Tiberias beyond the present height." The status of the Lake would not have to be changed. Major inflows only in the winter months, partly from the Yarmuk and Jordan. Water from the Lake would be drawn down exclusively in summer months.

But I want to make it clearly evident to you, Mr. Prime Minister, that with the full authority of the President of the U.S., we want to make it crystal clear that we have no desire for anything except for the most efficient ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ storage, and the water found in the Jordan which we will explore will go by contract to Israel.