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ISRAEL OFFICE OF INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM

9 October 1953

Avraham Harman, Reuven Dafni

David I. Marmor

Re: Time Correspondent's Report on the ~~Hy~~
Hydro-electric Incident.

Following are the main points of Jim Bell's cable from Bayruth:

1. The Zionists since the beginning of the British occupation have been endeavoring to exploit the waters of the Jordan and its tributaries without any consideration for the rights of the other riparian states. The tactics of the Zionists are encroachments by fait accompli.
2. UNRRA, as previously the Clapp Report, envisages the development of the area by irrigation projects connected with the Jordan.
3. The Arabs do not agree to resettlement because this implies the forfeit of the rights of the refugees to their lands in Israel, but they are inclined to accept the absence of resettlement and call it "ameliorating the refugee situation."
4. UNRRA prepared a report with the assistance of the Main Engineering Company of Boston and TVA experts to ascertain and evaluate the possibilities of utilizing the Jordan waters on a regional basis. After the report was prepared from the technical point of view, it was submitted to a French lawyer, Sevette, an authority on international riparian rights. The first reaction of Sevette was that the basic principle of diverting rivers is that you cannot divert a river from its locale before satisfying the water demands of the locale itself.
5. In an "off-the-record" addition to the main cable, Bell advised Time that the Israel intelligence has the key to the UN codes and the exchange of views among the UNRRA officials and the TVA experts and the Main Company in Boston and Sevette's reactions were intercepted by it. The UN staff knows of it on the basis of Israeli reactions in the past. Many times the Israel officials, in their dealings with the UN Truce staff, reacted to points raised in the confidential cables.
- 6.. The Israelis, learning in advance of the UNRRA report according to which the allocations of the Jordan waters will be 3/5 to the Arab states and 2/5 for Israel with some territorial adjustments beneficial to the Arabs, and of Sevette's opinion, hastened to start the construction of the hydro-electric projects in order to face the UN and the Arab states with a fait accompli. The consent given to the work on the 2nd of September by

.../Lieutenant

7/10/53
Lieutenant-Colonel Roy Tillotson was achieved by the Israelis on the basis of misinforming Tillotson that the work is a continuation of the Huleh drainage work. The Israel informant is identified by Bell as Captain Shlomo Reichman. When the UN staff learned what is really going on, they stopped the Israelis.

7. In an "off-the-record" addition to the main cable, Bell informed Time reliable that the U%S% and British legations in Syria agree fully with the Syrian point of view. He further related that according to information reaching Damascus and Beirut, Mr. Dulles had a very rough talk with Mr. Eban and warned him to stop the work "or else."

8. The whole cable is couched in anti-Israel language and fully upholds the Syrian point of view.

15.10.1953

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