

13 October 1953

Memorandum on the question of land ownership in the area  
of the present work site of the Banat Yaacov Canal Project

Results of the investigations by U.N. observers in the  
Safad Land Office

A) First investigation by Major Keevan, 25 September 1953.

On 25 September 1953, at 0830Z, Major Edward F. Keevan met with the Israeli Delegate, Lieutenant Ruttenberg, at the land office in Safad to verify alleged Arab ownership of four plots of land near the work site of the project. The four plots of land in question are:

No. 73/10, Block No. 13802. Land and mill. Title of property issued by Safad Land Office on 7 March 1946. Area of plot: 838 square meters.

No. 72/9, Block No. 13801. Water canal. Title of property issued by Safad Land Office on 7 March 1945. Area of plot: 551 square meters.

No. 73/9, Block No. 13802. Woodland. Title of property issued by Safad Land Office on 7 March 1946. Area of plot: 7 dunams and 493 square meters.

No. 73/1, Block No. 13802. Woodland. Title of property issued by Safad Land Office on 7 March 1946. Area of plot: 10 dunams and 893 square meters.

Ownership of the above plots is registered in the name of SALAH SAID HUSSEIN HINDI, and other members of the same family as co-owners.

A check of the books containing registration of land titles in Blocks 13801 and 13802 confirmed the ownership of these lands by the HINDI family, and also confirmed the amount of land in each plot.

/ The land

The land in question, amounting to about 20 dunams in area, is located on the west bank of the Jordan river where it bends and flows for a short distance in an east-west direction. It is the area in which work is being conducted by the project. The four plots, which are contiguous, include the water mill, two plots of woodland, and a narrow strip of land containing a canal or ditch which conducts water from the Jordan river to operate the mill.

Because of the system of sharing land ownership with the sons, each plot of land is jointly owned by many members of the same family. For example, twenty owners are listed for the 551 square meters of land containing the canal. One party listed had a 10/288th share in the ownership of this plot.

The small island in the Jordan river near the work site does not appear on the land map.

B) Second investigation by Major Keevan and Captain Giacomaggi, 5 October 1953.

On 5 October 1953, Major Keevan and Captain Giacomaggi went to the Safad Land Office to investigate land ownership in the central D.Z.

Lt. Ruttenberg, assistant to the SID, was present and acted as interpreter.

Various titles of property belonging to the Youssef and Hindi families were checked against the Safad land books.

U.N. observers reached the following conclusion as regards the Hindi family:

The property of the Hindi family in this sector of the D.Z. is formed by:

|                 |         |           |                    |
|-----------------|---------|-----------|--------------------|
| Block No. 13802 | (No. 1) | 10 dunams | 893                |
| Block No. 13802 | (No. 9) | 7 dunams  | 493                |
| Block No. 13802 | (No.10) | 0         | 838 m <sup>2</sup> |
| Block No. 13801 | (No. 9) | 0         | 551 m <sup>2</sup> |

The island is not shown on the Safad Land Books.

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