

The Link

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Israel's Drive For Water

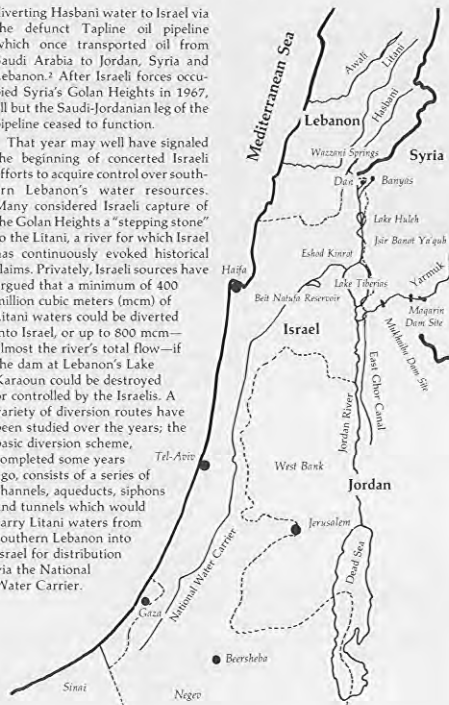
By Leslie C. Schmida

In startling testimony at the United Nations Security Council meeting on August 29, 1984, Lebanese Representative Rashid Fakhoury presented evidence indicating that Israel may be well on its way to diverting Lebanese waters from the Litani, Hasbani and Wazzani rivers. Citing information made available by the Lebanese Ministry of the Interior, Fakhoury reported that the engineering branch of the Israeli Ministry of Defense spent the latter half of August 1984 digging a three-kilometer-long tunnel from Deir Mimas on the Litani to Kfar Kila close to the Israeli border—a tunnel large enough to accommodate the total flow of the Litani.¹

At the same time, the Israeli Defense Forces have begun to fence off a number of public and private properties along the Wazzani River and have prohibited fishing in the river and other civilian activity; Marjayoun area farmers have complained to some recent American visitors that they have been forbidden by the Israelis from digging any new wells. Some lands along the Hasbani have also been fenced off to the Lebanese, and on August 14, the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* reported that Tahal, the Israeli water planning authority, had devised a means for

diverting Hasbani water to Israel via the defunct Tapline oil pipeline which once transported oil from Saudi Arabia to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.² After Israeli forces occupied Syria's Golan Heights in 1967, all but the Saudi-Jordanian leg of the pipeline ceased to function.

That year may well have signaled the beginning of concerted Israeli efforts to acquire control over southern Lebanon's water resources. Many considered Israeli capture of the Golan Heights a "stepping stone" to the Litani, a river for which Israel has continuously evoked historical claims. Privately, Israeli sources have argued that a minimum of 400 million cubic meters (mcm) of Litani waters could be diverted into Israel, or up to 800 mcm—almost the river's total flow—if the dam at Lebanon's Lake Karaoun could be destroyed or controlled by the Israelis. A variety of diversion routes have been studied over the years; the basic diversion scheme, completed some years ago, consists of a series of channels, aqueducts, siphons and tunnels which would carry Litani waters from southern Lebanon into Israel for distribution via the National Water Carrier.



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About This Issue

The Middle East's "water wars," most recently embracing reports of Israeli engineers working to divert South Lebanon's Wazzani River into Israel, extend back to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, when World Zionist Organization leaders called for a Jewish National Home in Palestine—whose borders would include the rivers in southern Lebanon and both banks of the Jordan River.

This issue looks at how Israel has expropriated Arab water resources over the years and why it is likely to go on doing so. It also examines the turnaround in U.S. policy towards Israel's water exploitation: from President Eisenhower's cutoff of aid to Israel in 1953, in protest over Israel's attempted diversion of a Jordan River tributary to President Reagan's policy in 1984 of ever-increasing direct assistance to Israel's water development projects, which strain

the region's water supply and thwart any chance for peace.

Our book selection is *Islam and Politics* by Prof. John Esposito of Holy Cross College in Worcester, MA. It is reviewed on page 14 by Prof. John Voll of the University of New Hampshire. Information on ordering this and other significant books on the Middle East is found on pages 15 and 16.

Our December issue of *The Link* will explore a venerable custom found in various Middle East traditions—in indeed in traditions worldwide—the ageless practice of gift-giving.

John F. Mahoney,
Executive Director

Since the 1978 Litani Operation, Israel has come increasingly closer to controlling the river. Shortly after the Israeli army entered Lebanon in 1978, a U.S. military observer claims to have witnessed Israeli soldiers burying pipes deep in the ground near Marjayoun. While aerial photographs have failed to locate the site, speculation continues as to the possible function of these pipes. Most likely, they are being used to syphon underground water from an aquifer fed by seepage from the Litani and Hasbani rivers and by underground streams from Mt. Hermon.³ Any increase in overall Israeli water supply cannot be verified, however, for Israel has not published full water or cultivation figures since 1978.

Prior to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Yuval Ne'eman, Israeli Minister of Science and Development, stated that the time had come for water-sharing and other joint projects with south Lebanon.

After the invasion, Gen. Sharon reportedly returned from Lebanon and informed Ne'eman that he had seen the Litani and that there wasn't enough water there worth taking. Israel then announced its willingness to buy any Litani water that Lebanon might wish to sell.⁴ Israeli representatives never raised the issue with the Lebanese, who in the talks preceding the May 17 Agreement had been prepared to discuss the subject of water.

Although Israeli officials have reacted indignantly to insinuations that Israel may have designs on Lebanese waters, Israeli actions since 1982 suggest otherwise. Immediately upon entering southern Lebanon, the Israelis stationed two battalions along the northeastern shore of Lake Karaoun, seized all hydrographic charts and technical documents relating to the Litani, fortified the Kaoukaba area near both the Litani and Hasbani riverbeds, and began aug-

menting the flow of the Hasbani into Israel by laying surface pipes to catch runoff and other water from nearby and mountain springs. Israeli troops were also stationed near a small water diversion on the Awali River and at a power plant downstream at Joun, giving Israel control over the main water supplies for Beirut and other coastal towns.⁵ Then, in January 1983, the Israelis conducted seismic soundings and engaged in construction activity near the Litani only three miles from the nearest water source in Israel. These activities have been confirmed by Israeli officials.

Actual evidence of a diversion itself has not yet been verified, possibly due to tight Israeli security throughout Lebanon's south, especially east of the bend in the Litani from where they can control not only that river, but the Hasbani and Wazzani as well. Alternatively, the Israelis may not have had time to resolve the physical obstacles to a diversion, such as the need for additional storage capacity in Lake Tiberias and the sheer size of the pumping works that would be required. Nonetheless, few analysts doubt Israel's ultimate intent to utilize waters now within its reach in southern Lebanon.

This pessimistic assessment reflects a long history of Zionist/Israeli water policy which appears to be repeating itself. Far from flowing with milk and honey, Palestine is a harsh land for all who live there, and assured supplies of water—a scarce resource at best—are essential for the livelihood of all the land's peoples. Accordingly, water was a motivational factor in Zionist politics long before the Mandate period. Fully aware of the hydrological as well as the political consequences, Israeli leaders plunged the country into a massive immigration campaign which dangerously overexploited all of the water resources within its boundaries. Although territorial expansion brought additional quantities under Israeli control time after time, growing demands for water continue to exceed supply.

Israel now faces a serious water shortage, aggravated by its intensification of agriculture in the Negev

and its settlement policy in both the West Bank and Israel itself. The country's water deficit will likely reach 450 mcm by 1985, and there are no new unexploited water resources within Israel itself to alleviate this shortage.⁶ Only limited increases in water supply can be expected from such techniques as

desalination, sewage reclamation and cloud seeding. How, then, does Israel expect to satisfy its projected water needs? A look at past experience may provide some insights into the future and provide a framework for assessing the latest developments in southern Lebanon.

Zionists Target Water Sources

Long before the British Mandate, the Balfour Declaration and the ultimate establishment of the State of Israel, Zionist policy focused on water, and the Nile was its first target. In 1902, when the Zionist leader Theodor Herzl pressed the British Government for a Jewish homeland in a British possession, Uganda was suggested. Herzl replied, "No . . . I can only use . . . Sinai peninsula, Egyptian Palestine, Cyprus."⁷ In subsequent discussions with Chamberlain, Herzl learned that Britain did not favor the idea of evicting Cypriots from their island for the sake of new inhabitants. Instead, Chamberlain preferred a Jewish settlement in Wadi el-Arish if Lord Cromer—then-Viceroy—agreed.

Herzl was not content with the prospect of settling only el-Arish, but rather, wished to claim all of Sinai for the Jews—a clear indication of the Zionists' large-scale aspirations even at this early date.⁸ This would be possible only if water could be made available, and he therefore quickly organized an investigation into the possibilities of irrigating Sinai with Nile water channelled under the Suez Canal via aqueduct. From November 11, 1902 until March 25, 1903, Herzl's commission explored Sinai and concluded, "if water becomes available, the soil, health, and atmospheric conditions in the desert area are conducive to the settlement of many people. . . . There can be desalination of soil, which will make it cultivable. The only way to achieve this

aim is to bring the Nile water through canals and aqueducts constructed under the Suez Canal."⁹

Herzl submitted this report to Lord Cromer in Egypt in conjunction with his proposal for a 99-year concession for Jewish settlement from Suez all the way to the eastern edge of Sinai and south to 29 degrees north latitude. Herzl conducted these deliberations in utmost secrecy; most Zionists at the time were unaware of his strategy.¹⁰

Unconvinced by Herzl's arguments, particularly that sufficient water could be made available for large-scale settlement in the Sinai, Lord Cromer dispatched his own technical committee under the direction of Sir William Garstein to study the feasibility of diverting the Nile to Sinai. Garstein's study, concluded in May 1903, conflicted with Herzl's presentation. Based on purely technical considerations, Garstein's study determined that because of the vast quantity of water required (five times that projected by Herzl), the project could be completed only at the expense of land in Egypt itself. No doubt, British self-interest at the time facilitated this decision; the Nile's Aswan Dam had been completed not more than a year earlier, and the ensuing increase in cotton production served to firmly link Egyptian agriculture to the British textile industry. England's economic interests at that time clearly outweighed any political benefits to be gained through the establishment of a Jewish homeland.

Sixteen years later, when representatives of France and Great Britain met at Versailles to divide the spoils of World War I, Zionists, among others, were lobbying intensively for a share of the fallen Ottoman Empire. Zionist pressures induced Great Britain to claim jurisdiction in Palestine as far north as the Litani River, as well as all of Transjordan and the headwaters of the Jordan River. French demands, backed by the Sykes-Picot Agreement, partly prevailed, however, and ensured that the whole of the Litani basin as well as Mt. Hermon were included in the French Mandates of Lebanon and Syria. Nonetheless, the British Government did obtain a much more favorable northern frontier than the French wished to concede. The Sykes-Picot Agreement had suggested a frontier just north of Haifa, which would have given Lake Tiberias to the French. In the final settlement, however, Lake Huleh, Lake Tiberias and a substantial portion of the Upper Jordan River were included under Britain's Mandate of Palestine.

From this time onward, Zionist efforts were directed towards gaining control of possible land and water resources not granted to the British Mandate authority at the Paris Peace Conference. In the process, British representatives subordinated the rights of indigenous Arabs, handicapped from the beginning by the Zionist affiliations of many major Mandate officials in Palestine.¹¹ This bias of the Mandate administration helped further Zionist aims in Palestine at the direct expense of the region's Arab inhabitants.

For example, the Ottoman Land Bank—previously a source of low-interest loans for small farmers—was closed by the British Mandate government. Since private moneylenders charged up to 60 percent annual interest, many of the Arab farmers, forced to borrow from them, eventually lost their lands, which were subsequently taken over by Jewish land-purchasing organizations.¹² Arabs protested this loss, and the Mandate authority eventually intervened to reduce Jewish ability to buy Arab land in at least the more

heavily populated Arab areas. This proved to be only a short-term concession to Arab rights, however. Although only seven percent of the land of Palestine was Jewish-owned in 1947—according to evidence presented to the U.N. Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) by Jewish leaders—the creation of the State of Israel placed 53 percent of the territory under direct Israeli control.

One of the early results of Zionist efforts to gain control over local water resources was the "Rutenberg Concession." In 1926, the Administration of Palestine granted to the Zionist-owned Palestine Electric Corporation, the 70-year concession for exclusive rights to the development of water resources in Palestine. Representing the corporation was Pinhas Rutenberg—who, in the words of Winston Churchill, "had behind him all the principal Zionist societies in Europe and America . . ." ¹³

The government of Transjordan, still under British Mandate, in 1928 agreed to accept the concession. A dam was then constructed on the Yarmuk River to serve a power plant on the East Bank of the Jordan River. Destroyed during the 1947-48 hostilities which accompanied the creation of the Israeli state, the dam was the only real project undertaken by the corporation which remained a special interest group for many years and set a precedent for the priority of interests to be addressed in developing regional water resources.

Constantly, British officials referred to the "absorptive capacity" of Palestine: that is, the degree of immigration which the region's limited resource endowment could tolerate. The allusion was essentially to water, without which even the most fertile land was useless. Partly in response to conflicting reports regarding the limits of this "absorptive capacity," the Woodhead Technical Commission (on Partition) during the course of its inquiries conducted a hydrological study in 1938, which contributed to the commission's conclusion that the partition of Palestine was not economically viable. Instead, the commission recommended an economic federation among the separate

political entities that would arise from any partition plan.

The Woodhead Commission's recommendation against partition, as well as the MacDonald White Paper of 1939 which limited Jewish immigration to a once-and-for-all 75,000, motivated Zionist attempts to justify massive immigration by demonstrating a high absorptive capacity in a land depicted as virtually uninhabited. ¹⁴ The most prominent of these was W.C. Lowdermilk's 1939 essay *Land of Promise*, commissioned by the Jewish Agency and later published in book form. Lowdermilk emphasized the abundance of land and water in Palestine, which he maintained was being exploited by a mere 300,000 Arab inhabitants who, through centuries of neglect, had destroyed the region's land and water capital. The figure obviously was false, for an estimated 750,000 to 880,000 Palestinian Arabs became refugees in the 1947-48 period alone. ¹⁵

For all its rhetorical power, Lowdermilk's work did not constitute a practicable strategy. This was provided a few years later, when Messrs. Hayes and Savage, under contract with the Commission on Palestine Surveys in the U.S., published *TVA on the Jordan*, a technical version of Lowdermilk's plan which established a framework for redistributing Palestine's waters. While claiming that the project would "not affect the actual ownership of any water rights," the Hayes document asserted, mistakenly, that all water not lying within the land of absolute ownership, defined by the Ottoman Code of 1869 as *mulk*, was public property and therefore to be appropriated by the fledgling Israeli state. Rights of access to surface flow were assumed to be attached to specific property titles, while underground water sources were not. ¹⁶

Hayes failed to distinguish between public lands and those under group ownership of an entire village, or *musha* holdings. The latter, as privately-owned land, should have been categorized as *mulk* in Hayes' narrow dichotomy, but instead was considered land—and hence water—which could immediately be exploited

under Israeli auspices. Whether an intentional misinterpretation of Ottoman law or not, this erroneous conception of Ottoman land patterns was promoted in Israel even before the Hayes Plan as the basis for land redistribution in the area. The Hayes Plan was never implemented, but its central feature of diverting almost one-half the annual flow of the Jordan River out of the river basin remained the foundation of future Israeli plans. While Israel has concentrated on diverting as much water as possible out of the Jordan River Valley, Arab plans have stressed utilization of river water within the watershed area. Sir M. MacDonald, who conducted a two-and-one-half-month survey in the Jordan Valley in 1949, concluded that on "moral and natural bases . . . the waters in the catchment area should not be diverted outside that area unless the requirements of all those who use, or genuinely intend to use, the waters within the area have been satisfied." ¹⁷

The fighting which accompanied the proclamation of the Israeli state in 1948 led to the expansion of its borders—about 40 percent beyond the limits envisaged in the Partition Plan—to include the northwest area and the Negev. Had it not been for the latter, some feel, the water conflict might never have arisen, for the settlement of this additional land—the Negev in particular—required additional water resources which in turn encouraged further territorial expansion. The region's limited water sources were soon strained by massive increases in population on both sides of the Jordan Valley watershed: Jewish immigration to the west and the massive influx of Palestinian refugees to the east.

A central feature of all early Israeli water projects was irrigation of the Negev, motivated by a desire for "the dispersal of settlement throughout the length and breadth of the state for political and security reasons," ¹⁸ despite ample evidence in Israel that this constituted inefficient use of the region's resources. Prof. H.H. Hayman of the Technion (Israel Institute of Technology) in Haifa informed Israeli officials in the late 1950's that their plan to divert waters from the

north to the Negev was extremely wasteful, citing evidence that water loss from evaporation was three to four times as much in the southern desert as it was in the Galilee region.¹⁹ Meanwhile, E.L.M. Burns, Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), maintained that only an additional 250,000 acres could be tilled if water was made available. Much of this land was a few miles south of Beerseba, according to Burns, and expensive to farm, while the rest of the Negev was "true desert and all the water in the world would not help."²⁰

Despite the inadvisability of undertaking such a project, Israel persisted in its plan to irrigate the Negev by diverting the Jordan River out of the watershed area to the desert. This was the central feature of the National Water Carrier project, the first stages of which began almost immediately after the 1948 Armistice Agreement which gave Israel partial access to the Jordan headwaters and Lake Huleh, in turn necessary to irrigate the coastal plain and the Negev—as proposed in the Lowdermilk-Hayes Plan.

The Lowdermilk-Hayes Plan from the beginning aroused the anger of the Arabs because of its basic intention to divert water away from the Jordan Valley and its people. Any benefits Jordan would receive from the project were to be postponed until subsequent stages of the plan. According to the Hayes report, "the recovery of the remaining Jordan waters must await completion of the previous irrigation works and diversions for the river, which will enable a more accurate determination of what is left in the Jordan."²¹ In other words, Israel would take what water it desired from the Jordan River, and if significant flow remained, Jordan might also benefit from hydrological development of the river, almost all of which flowed in Jordanian territory.

The first stages of the water carrier project were implemented soon after the General Armistice Agreement and involved Israeli activities inside the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) which was being adminis-

tered by the Mixed Armistice Commission (MAC) under UNTSO auspices. In 1951, Israel moved bulldozers and military units into the DMZ and began to drain the Huleh swamp area, temporarily occupying 100 acres and permanently occupying 7 acres of Arab-owned land in the DMZ. The Israeli Government tried to buy the land, but the Arabs refused to sell. Israel continued working nonetheless, firing upon Syrian troops who moved closer but did not return fire. U.S. Maj. Gen. A.R. Bolling, Assistant Army Chief of Staff for Intelligence, characterized the situation as follows: "... Apparently, Israel is prepared to risk military operations against any of the Arab states, and several recent Israeli actions appear to have been designed, at least in part, to provoke Arab initiation of hostilities."²² Quite a different perspective was portrayed by Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett, who claimed resources even within the DMZ and asserted, "our soldiers in the north are defending the Jordan water resources so that water may be brought to the farmers of the Negev."²³

Syria took the issue to the U.N. Security Council for resolution, claiming that no state had absolute sovereignty in the DMZ and that there could be no unilateral action there which might alter the status quo without the acquiescence of the MAC Chairman or the other party. Syria interpreted this Israeli action as a first step toward annexation of the DMZ. Israel, meanwhile, refused to attend MAC meetings held in the DMZ, insisting that the zone was under Israeli sovereignty; it therefore refused to accept any UNTSO ruling on the matter. The UNTSO Chief of Staff denied Israel's sovereignty over the area, at the same time refuting Syria's charge that Israeli activities were upsetting the military balance in the DMZ. He further ruled that the Israeli activity would be legal if it did not upset normal life in the DMZ and if it did not affect the rights of Arabs there. The Security Council concurred in this judgment, ordered Israel to cease work on the drainage, and authorized only civilian projects in the DMZ. Israel sus-

ended the project after the U.N. ruling, but used the authorization for civilian activities as a justification for the diversion which it would undertake two years later.²⁴

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan at this time was also formulating plans for water resource development. Named after Max Bungar, a U.S. representative stationed in Jordan, the Bungar Plan proposed hydrological and irrigation development at Maqarin on the Yarmuk River. The two beneficiaries, Jordan and Syria, approved the plan in 1953, and UNRWA apportioned \$40 million towards the project's estimated total cost of \$70 million. The U.S. Technical Cooperation Agency (USTCA) and the Jordanian Government also agreed to cofinance the dam.

Israeli protests began immediately, and Israeli leaders demanded that, as a lower riparian on the Yarmuk, Israel should be consulted in any plans involving that river. In July 1953, three representatives of the Palestine Electric Corporation met with the U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N., the U.N. Secretary General, and British Government officials to complain about the Bungar Plan. The Israelis claimed that the "Palestine Electric Corporation has the concessionary rights to the exclusive use of the waters in question and for the provision of such an electric power system. It calls attention to its well-acquired rights and its intention to vindicate those rights."²⁵

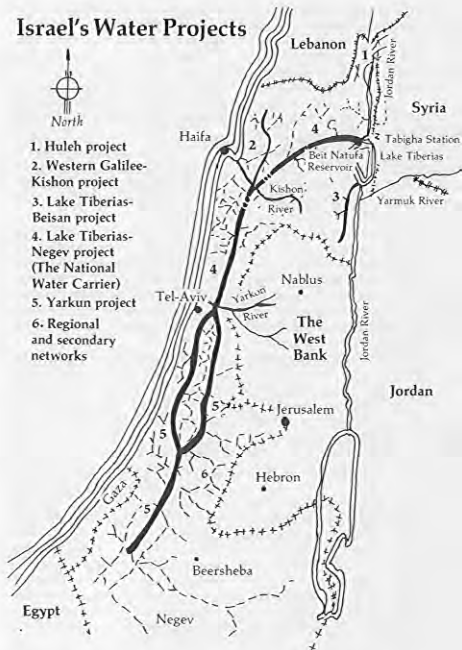
The British officially maintained that the matter should be resolved among the corporation, Jordan and Israel, while the U.S., considering the 1926 concession to the Palestine Electric Corporation to be of questionable validity, withdrew its financial support from the project and pressured UNRWA to do the same. President Eisenhower reiterated his earlier assertions that development of the entire Jordan Valley watershed should be a cooperative venture among all riparian states.

For several years already, the Eisenhower Administration had advocated the establishment of a Jordan Valley Authority, primarily because of its prospective capacity to

Israel's Water Projects



1. Huleh project
2. Western Galilee-Kishon project
3. Lake Tiberias-Beisan project
4. Lake Tiberias-Negev project (The National Water Carrier)
5. Yarkun project
6. Regional and secondary networks



permanently resettle Palestinian refugees on lands that could be made productive through such a venture. In 1952, UNRWA had requested the Tennessee Valley Authority to synthesize unilateral Arab and Israeli plans for regional water resource development, and with the help of the Charles T. Main engineering consulting firm in Boston, the draft for a unified plan was designed. The plan was almost completed when it was learned that Israel had begun diverting the Jordan River at Jisr Banat Ya'qub in the DMZ.

The diversion, begun in September, was characterized by the Israelis as a small one designed only to pro-

vide hydroelectric power. However, the canal was larger than necessary for this purpose, and Israeli officials later admitted that it was actually intended to carry large volumes of water to the Beit Natufa Reservoir and then to the Negev.

This action came as an unpleasant surprise to U.S. officials. Not only had Israel enthusiastically endorsed the principle of regional cooperation two months earlier, but the U.S. Foreign Operations Administration, which had assisted the Ministry of Agriculture in developing a national water plan, had no previous knowledge of the diversion.²⁶ No line-item had been entered for it in the Israeli

national budget, giving credibility to suspicions that the diversion had been hastily implemented in order to preclude the regional agreement towards which the U.S. was working.

Partly in response to internal pressure from the kibbutz and moshav movements—two main elements of the Mapam party espousing agricultural interests who lobbied their Knesset spokesmen to continue the diversion—Israel ignored all UNTSO and U.S. requests to cease work on the canal.²⁷ Instead, the work crews were enlarged, an extra shift added, and floodlights were installed to enable round-the-clock construction.

Once again, Syria turned to the Security Council for arbitration, arguing that its own water interests would suffer and Israel's military advantage would improve if the canal were completed. Abba Eban, then Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. and the U.N., referring to the all-but-nominal Rutenburg Concession, sought to establish that since the concession was granted to a private concern, work in the DMZ was authorized under the Security Council ruling of 1951. By 1953, however, the Palestine Electric Corporation had incorporated Israeli state interests. Eleven years later the name would change to the Israeli Electric Corporation, Ltd., with the state by that time a major shareholder.

This placed the U.S. administration in the awkward position of supporting the U.N.'s role in the DMZ while providing aid that enabled Israel to blatantly contradict all UNTSO policies, procedures and requests. On September 18, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles informed the Israeli Ambassador in Washington that until Israel halted the Jisr Banat Ya'qub diversion, the U.S. would suspend economic aid to Israel.²⁸ No public disclosure was made regarding this U.S. action until almost a month later, when international outcry over the Israeli attack on the Palestinian village of Qibya made announcement of the already-implemented aid cutoff a moral and political imperative.²⁹

Several days later, the U.S. State Department announced the imminent conclusion of the Main Plan

[which followed the Bungar Plan] for development of the Jordan River watershed, for which the U.S. would pay most of the projected cost of \$121 million. Little attention was paid to this event in either the U.S. or Israel, where Zionists were up in arms about the U.S. aid cutoff; the question of the Jisr Banat Ya'qub diversion was conveniently ignored. Then, on October 29, Eisenhower announced that the Israelis had stopped work on the diversion and would cooperate with the U.N. to resolve the regional water dispute. U.S. aid to Israel was immediately restored.³⁰

Israel's willingness to cooperate with U.N. and U.S. mediators was relatively short-lived, for the diversion project was resumed in 1956. However, the Israelis then discovered that the bedrock of Beit Natufa was not watertight, and in 1958, the diversion point was relocated to Eshod Kinrot at the northwest corner of Lake Tiberias which Israel was then forced to use for water storage despite its partial salinity.

The status of Lake Tiberias at that time was still somewhat ambiguous. The Syrian border as delineated by the General Armistice Agreement reached almost to the lake's northeastern shore, then the best area for fishing. By the Anglo-French Agreements of 1922, 1923 and 1926, however, French-controlled Syria had been granted the same rights of access to Lake Tiberias as had the Palestinians and Jewish immigrants in British Mandate territory.³¹ While Syria as well as the U.N. maintained that this Mandate-invoked provision remained valid, Israel refuted it—interestingly enough—even while asserting the continuing legitimacy of the Rutenburg Concession, also concluded under the auspices of Mandate authorities.

Israel persisted in preventing Syrian utilization of Lake Tiberias, established fortified kibbutzim along the shore, and patrolled the northeastern edge of the lake using as police boats illegally-armored landing craft complete with machine guns and cannon. This facilitated raids on Syrian villages, provoking Syrian attacks on boats which came

close to shore. After repeated U.N. urgings that Israel eliminate all landings on the northeast shore and use only police on the patrol boats, Israel complied temporarily in 1954. Incidents continued nonetheless as Israel patrolled the northeast shore, the Syrians fished in the lake, and U.N. authorities proved unable to maintain control of the situation. Eventually Israeli occupation of Syria's Golan Heights in 1967 would in effect "solve" the question of Syrian fishing rights in Lake Tiberias as well as other points of contention in the DMZ.

Plans for the implementation of the National Water Carrier were formalized in the seven-year plan which Israel adopted in 1953, whereby the country's water supply would be doubled by 1961 from 810 mcm to 1,730 mcm annually. This was soon replaced by a ten-year plan to divert 500 mcm from the Upper Jordan River to the Negev,³² entailing the tapping of underground resources and construction of a pipeline from the Galilee region to the Negev.

The Israelis completed this pipeline in the early 1960's and proceeded to pump saline water into the Jordan River just north of the Armistice Line, polluting the river below that point. According to the *Atlas of Israel*, "the problem of salinity has been solved in part by removing the water of the saline springs from the lake by pumping and channeling it southwards into the lower Jordan."³³ The consequences of this action came as no surprise to one Israeli newspaper.

In due course, the Jordan will be reduced to little more than a seasonal trickle . . . into which will be dumped saline waters diverted by Israel from nearby springs or pumped from the bottom of Lake Tiberias, [and] will be wholly unsuitable for irrigating a soil already suffering from a high degree of salinity.³⁴

Immediately following Israel's raid at Qibya, Syrian complaints to the U.N. Security Council regarding Israel's diversion activities in the DMZ, and suspension of the Bungar Plan, President Eisenhower sent Eric Johnston to the region to present the Main

Plan to the various protagonists in an attempt to negotiate a settlement. Ill-fated from the beginning, the Johnston mission occurred before the dust had settled from the above-mentioned incidents, and just as Israel was publishing its own unilateral seven-year water development plan.

By the terms of the Main Plan, Israel was to be allocated 33 percent of the total water resources within the Jordan Valley watershed, although only 23 percent of those waters originated in Israel. The plan's most important provisions were as follows:

1. Building a dam on the Hasbani in Lebanon to transfer water to the Tel Hay power site (in Israel);
2. Diverting the Sarid springs (in Israel) and the Banyas, Dan, Wazzani and Hasbani rivers (all partly or wholly outside Israel) to irrigate the regions of Huleh, Upper Galilee, Hashahar and the Jezreel Valley (all within Israel);
3. Building a dam on the Yarmuk at Adasiya to divert flood flows to Lake Tiberias, thus maintaining its water level despite the diversion of the Jordan River headwaters;
4. Utilization of Lake Tiberias as a storage facility, raising the lake two meters to enlarge its capacity;
5. Building canals from Lake Tiberias to both the East and West Ghor and Zhor regions of the Jordan Valley in order to settle 150,000 refugees in that area;
6. Possibly building a dam at Maqar-in on the Yarmuk.

The Main Plan specified that the entire usable water supply be distributed by gravity flow within the watershed area, and suggested that international supervision accompany the plan's implementation. Formulated without any field study and without regard to state boundaries or to the legal limits of water rights in the region, the report was based instead upon topographical maps and previous studies of varying degrees of accuracy. In such a highly politicized environment, these were indeed serious oversights.

Reactions to the Main Plan, also known as the Unified Plan or the Johnston Plan, illustrate the various parties' perspectives on the feasibility

and desirability of any regional water plan. Israeli officials stated that "its transparent purpose is to hamstring Israel and transfer the control over its waters to foreigners. It completely disregards the irrigation of the Negev, which is due to become the country's main supplier of grain and vegetables."³⁵ The basic principle of in-basin use of river water was violently rejected by Israel. Israeli criticism of the plan included the argument that Jordan's water quota and estimated irrigable land as defined by Main were "exaggerated," and thus 150 mcm of water were to be permitted to "flow wasted into the Dead Sea despite Israel's demonstrable needs in the Negev."³⁶ Finally, Israel rejected the idea of storing Yarmuk water in Tiberias because the Yarmuk runs almost entirely through Arab territory and it did not want the Arabs to have a legitimate claim to the lake.

The Arab reaction to the Main Plan focused more extensively on the proposal's inequitable aspects. For example, while Syria and Lebanon were to provide the bulk of water distributed under the plan's auspices, the latter was to receive none, while Syria was allocated only a nominal amount. Israel, on the other hand, was to receive an amount which exceeded its *in-basin* needs. The Arab states (as well as most other nations) have continuously emphasized the priority of fulfilling in-basin water requirements. Jordan in particular objected to the use of Lake Tiberias as a storage facility. This would have placed Jordanian access to its own waters under Israeli control and would have replaced the fresh water Jordan received from the Yarmuk with saline water from Lake Tiberias.

After Johnston's first visit in 1953, both Israel and the Arabs began preparing their own versions of a regional water plan to present to Johnston upon his return. Concurrently, a detailed scientific study was conducted by the Baker and Harza [U.S.] engineering firms. The study recommended unrestricted use of Lake Tiberias as a storage and regulating reservoir, and reaffirmed the need for additional storage on the Yarmuk at Maqarin. This study also

demonstrated that there was more irrigable land in the Jordan Valley area than previously thought, and that its water duty (the water requirements for specific crops) had been overestimated in the past. However, the water duties and cropping patterns upon which the engineers based their recommendations assumed extensive areas of barley production, although barley was already in surplus in Jordan and hence not a reasonable crop by which to assess Jordan's water needs. Tomatoes, squash and other vegetables commonly cultivated in the Middle East require much more water than does barley, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture information.

Jordan's share of regional waters as stipulated by the Main Plan was nonetheless reduced. Israel, meanwhile, continued to complain that the figures calculated by Baker and Harza for Jordan's water duty were still too high; Israeli engineers maintained that the large amounts of groundwater in the Jordan Valley indicated that the Kingdom should receive less water from the Jordan River. One may speculate as to whether the groundwater to which the Israelis referred was that water table lying under the West Bank from which the Jews in Palestine were drawing water even before 1948.

The "Arab Plan," submitted to Johnston in 1954, incorporated the principles established in the Baker-Harza report, including the dam at Maqarin and in-basin use of Jordan River water. A technical committee was established under the auspices of the Arab League, with representatives from Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, to make further studies of regional water issues and the ramifications of various proposals. A key provision in the Arab Plan as presented to Johnston was that the region's waters would be distributed by gravity flow rather than by pumping works. This would keep Jordan River water inside the river basin—where the existing volume of water was already insufficient for irrigating all of the basin's irrigable lands—rather than diverting it to the Negev as the Israelis proposed.

The water quotas which resulted

from the application of this principle of in-basin water use, as listed in Table 1 (see page 10) clearly were unacceptable to the Israelis, who had already prepared their own alternative plan, which was equally unacceptable to the Arabs. The Israeli proposal, called the Cotton Plan after a consulting U.S. engineer, included the waters of Lebanon's Litani River; the Israelis argued that since hydroelectric benefits could be obtained by utilizing the drop in altitude between the river's source and the Jordan Valley, it could not be excluded from any regional plan. This diversion, in their opinion, would reduce the salinity of Lake Tiberias and increase the flow in the Jordan River after Israel diverted the waters north of the lake and the Kingdom of Jordan diverted the Yarmuk.

Johnston returned to the Middle East no closer to a solution than when he left. Faced with two essentially conflicting proposals, Johnston was clearly more supportive of Israeli demands, except that for the Litani. "If you tell me now," stated Johnston to the Arabs, "unequivocally, that the water must be used within the basin, then I will tell you here that there is no use in my going to the Israelis at all . . ."³⁷ The essential conflict of whether the plan's purpose was to develop the Negev or the Jordan Valley was thus in essence "resolved" in favor of the Israelis.

Johnston also offered Israel, on the basis of the latter's refutation of the Baker-Harza report, a higher water quota than had existed in the initial plan, and he accepted the Israeli demand for unencumbered diversion of river water outside the river basin. The only "concession" Israel made in the negotiations was to use Lake Tiberias as a reservoir, although this was because the first-choice site for a reservoir at Beit Natufia was no longer a feasible alternative because of leakage; therefore, Jordan would be allowed to build the Maqarin Dam in order to store the waters of the Yarmuk.

This revised version of the plan was still unacceptable to the Arabs on both technical and political grounds. Its purpose, they felt, was to settle the refugees permanently, thereby aban-

doning Palestinian rights. It was also clear that when Israel tapped a vast quantity of Jordan River water for use outside the basin, the remainder would be rendered unacceptably saline. Israel made no pretense of hiding its goal to heavily populate the Negev region, viewed as a security threat by the Arabs. In addition, the problem of international supervision was never resolved (the Arabs wanted it, Israel didn't), and no mutual agreement on water allocations was ever reached.

In 1960, the Technical Commission of the Arab League finally formalized plans to develop the Jordan River tributaries for the mutual benefit of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, although the project was not implemented for another four years. Construction began in 1964 for a dam on the Yarmuk and for diversion of the headwaters of the Jordan; this was considered vital for Jordan to replace the water it would

lose when Israel began pumping water to the Negev, and it did not constitute a serious threat to the "lifblood" of Israel, whose leaders referred to this action as a "token diversion." Nonetheless, the Israeli Army soon began firing upon the Syrians, and the Israeli press argued that the dispute over the Jordan River provided an opportunity for war at a propitious time for Israel.

When war did in fact break out in 1967, the water issue was among major Israeli concerns in launching a preemptive attack. The action put an end to the Arab diversion; Israeli tanks and troops, stationed across the proposed route, effectively completed Israel's encirclement of the headwaters of the Upper Jordan. Concurrently, seizure of Syria's Golan Heights assured Israeli protection of the Lake Tiberias pumping works and enabled Israel to preclude any Syrian

or multilateral Arab effort to divert the Upper Jordan back to Arab territory or to develop the Yarmuk.

The war also brought West Bank land and water under full Israeli control. While this region has more abundant water resources than most of the surrounding area, much of it is dependent upon rainfall. This includes about 600 mcm of groundwater, the West Bank's most important source. The two aquifers arising there supply almost all the groundwater for northern and central Israel. Indeed, one-third of Israel's pre-1967 water consumption of 1.6 billion cubic meters originated in the West Bank and was tapped by drilling on the Israeli side of the Armistice Line. The Israelis used this water for irrigation as well as to counteract their overpumping of coastal aquifers.

The Litani Dam at Karaoun, at the southern end of Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, in 1967

United Nations



Table 1
Jordan Valley Regional Water Plans

	Main Plan		Arab Plan		Cotton* Plan	
	Water†	Area††	Water	Area	Water	Area
Jordan	774	490	861	490	575	430
Lebanon	—	—	35	35	450.7	350
Syria	45	30	132	119	30	30
Israel	394	420	200	234	1,290	1,790
Total	1,213	940	1,228	878	2,345.7	2,600

†Million cubic meters

††Thousands of dunums

*The Cotton Plan includes the water of the Litani River, as well as that of the Jordan and Yarmuk rivers.

(Adapted from Brexler, p. 224)

Smooth functioning of the West Bank well system is the linchpin in the overall Israeli water balance. In order to ensure control of well-water supply, Israel must control the aquifers in their entirety. Control of the West Bank per se is therefore imperative. Current Israeli planning considers the West Bank to be a "water reservoir of Israel,"³⁸ and accordingly, Israel uses 75 percent of those water resources it "shares" with the Palestinians. This leaves the Palestinian majority on the West Bank with only 25 percent of the waters originating on their land.³⁹

Israeli propaganda, to justify appropriation of West Bank water resources, claims that the regional inhabitants have inefficiently utilized resources and that area irrigation systems are wasteful, thereby necessitating "efficient administration and conservation in irrigation systems in Judea and Samaria . . ."⁴⁰ However, only five percent of West Bank land is irrigated by the Palestinians, whose per capita water consumption (including that for agriculture) is only 23 percent that among Israelis. The disparity in per capita domestic water consumption is even greater, as Table 2 demonstrates. (See page 11.)

Palestinian water consumption is limited by a quota based upon the average consumption recorded in 1967 and 1968; the total annual water ration for Palestinian agriculture is

fixed at a level 20 percent higher than that recorded in 1967.⁴¹ Yet, because the years 1967-68 experienced less-than-average rainfall, and because Palestinian farmers were recovering from damage suffered in the 1967 war, consumption during the two years on which the quota is based was far below normal.

The official Israeli explanation for refusing to increase Palestinian water consumption is that "increased productivity can take place by improved on-farm irrigation methods."⁴² Yet, all innovations or improvements must be approved by the military government, and most requests—including replacement of pumping works with new ones or open pipe canal systems with closed pipes, which actually conserve water—are denied. Terracing or other Palestinian land development which might impede the surface flow of water to Israel is also forbidden.

Meanwhile, as of August 1982, the Israelis had drilled at least 30 new wells in the West Bank—deep bore holes from 300 to 600 meters deep which pump an estimated 15-17 mcm annually—for use solely by the Israelis; the Beit Eba well near Nablus was supposedly drilled to serve Arab villages in the vicinity, but in the end it almost exclusively served Israeli settlements.⁴³ No Palestinian since 1967 has received permission to drill a new irrigation well, and less than

10 new wells for domestic Palestinian consumption have been authorized. Israeli wells are deeper and thus pump more water than Arab wells; in 1977-78, 17 Israeli wells in the Jordan Valley pumped 14.1 mcm, while 106 Arab wells pumped only 12.1 mcm.⁴⁴

Many of the Israeli wells have been drilled close to Arab wells and springs, with devastating results. Output and water levels in the Arab wells have declined—precisely as Israeli hydrological studies conducted *beforehand* predicted—and their salinity content has increased. Twelve Arab wells have dried up since the 1967 occupation.

By 1976, Israel was using somewhere between 95 and 98 percent of its proven renewable water supply. Some sources indicate that by 1979, it was using more than 100 percent, and others calculate that an additional 400-500 mcm will be required by 1990 for domestic consumption alone, and this to support only the increase in Israel's urban population.⁴⁵ Israel must significantly increase its total water consumption if it is not to suffer a declining standard of living and reduction in economic growth. The additional quantities of water necessary to sustain increasing growth within Israel and a continuation of the settlement policy can come from only a limited number of sources—resources in southern Lebanon already discussed, as well as nearby quantities of water not yet appropriated by Israel, including the Nile River in Egypt and the Yarmuk River which flows through Jordan.

Access to the Nile would increase Israeli agricultural production 18 times over, and has not been considered far-fetched by Israeli planners. Reviving Herzl's scheme of some 70 years earlier, Tahal engineer Elisha Kelly in 1974 devised a plan which envisioned transporting Nile water some 220 kilometers under the Suez Canal, across Sinai in a concrete aqueduct to Khan Younis in Gaza, and from there across the Negev towards Beersheba. In September 1978, the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv* wrote that this proposal was being considered seriously.⁴⁶

Fourteen months later, on Novem-

ber 28, 1979, Egyptian President Sadat gave the green light for building a "peace canal" to irrigate half-a-million feddans (a feddan is a unit of area equal to 1,038 acres) in the Sinai with water from the Nile. Sadat also ordered a complete study for possibly bringing Nile water to Jerusalem to serve pilgrims to the holy places.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, in Israel, the press discussed the possible construction of a canal to transport water from the Nile to the Negev where it would merge with the National Water Carrier.

These negotiations were not well known in the Arab world until the relevant correspondence between Sadat and Begin was published in the Egyptian press. This correspondence centered around Begin's unwillingness to compromise on Jerusalem, even for the promise of water for the Negev. Considerable opposition to the proposal on legal, economic and

The major problem encountered since the canal first began operating in 1962 is the silt which accumulates at the mouth of the feeder tunnel connecting the river to the canal. However, the river forms the post-1967 Armistice Line between Jordan and Israeli-occupied territory, and for more than five years after the war, Jordanian water authorities, who had controlled the problem through periodic maintenance until 1967, were not admitted to the militarized zone in order to service the river.

By 1976, the flow of water into the East Ghor Canal was seriously impeded by the accumulation of silt. American mediation that year and again in July of the drought year 1979 enabled Jordanian authorities to remove the rocks that had collected around the silt island—though not the silt itself—without Israeli intervention. A few days after the 1979

the U.S. Congress appropriated \$150 million for building the Maqarin Dam, contingent upon a regional settlement to the water dispute. By the time blueprints for the dam were completed in 1980, the U.S. had already invested \$20 million in the project and West Germany another \$5 million. Contract bidding was scheduled to open in February 1981.

At this point, a U.S. mission led by senior State Department official Philip Habib visited the region in an attempt to conclude a water-sharing arrangement by persuading the Jordanians to accept Israeli demands for much more Yarmuk water than the amount to which Israel had previously agreed. This included 25–40 mcm within the Yarmuk Triangle and an additional quantity for use on the West Bank. (The Israeli press quoted 140 mcm for the latter purpose, but this figure has never been officially confirmed.)

The Habib-led discussions failed to produce a solution to disputes over Yarmuk waters. In the meantime, the Israelis continue to pump an unauthorized 100 mcm of Yarmuk water into Lake Tiberias, and from there it is pumped up to Jewish settlements in the Golan Heights as well as into the National Water Carrier. Since 1983, Israel has refused to participate in the Mixed Armistice Commission, the only legitimized means by which communication with Jordan on this issue was previously possible.

According to a recent article by Ya'acov Friedler in the *Jerusalem Post*, Israel plans to draw 60–70 mcm annually from the Yarmuk. Quoting remarks made by Israeli Water Commissioner Zerah Yishai at the 12th Annual Convention of the Agricultural Engineering Association, Friedler reports that this will become possible within the next 18 months, when a fourth \$20 million pumping unit necessary to accommodate the increased water will be installed at Tabaha on the northwest shore of Lake Tiberias. According to Yishai, water will be removed from Lake Tiberias to make room for the Yarmuk water and injected into the overexploited coastal aquifers.⁴⁸

Table II
Water Consumption in the West Bank and Israel

(in cubic meters)

	West Bank*	Israel**
Per capita consumption	124	537
Domestic purposes only	13	86

*Hisham Awartani, *Water Resources and Policies*, Nabhus: An-Najah National University, 1975, p. 2 (Arabic).

***Kolme: The Israeli Journal of Development*, No. 10, 1977, p. 4.

political grounds was generated in Egypt; most importantly, it was noted that Egypt would face a water shortage of 200 billion cubic meters by the year 2000 if it continues with land reclamation policies and other efforts to feed the country's proliferating population.

For the moment, however, Israel is concentrating upon rivers closer to home, such as the Yarmuk. Since Israel's diversion of the Jordan River, the Yarmuk serves as the major water source for the eastern side of the Jordan Valley. The East Ghor Canal, built with U.S. financial and technical assistance over a seven-year period beginning in 1959, carries Yarmuk water through the valley to irrigate Jordanian crops.

maintenance effort, according to well-informed local sources, the Israelis slipped down to the river at night and replaced the rocks in such a way as to increase the flow of water bypassing the East Ghor Canal feeder tunnel (and therefore flowing into Israeli territory). Both armies mobilized along the Armistice Line, and a military confrontation was only narrowly averted.

Among the provisions of the 1954 Revised Unified Plan discussed earlier, Israel was to receive 25 mcm of Yarmuk water to irrigate the small amount of Israeli land located in the Yarmuk Triangle. This amount was to flow to Israel primarily during the summer, regulated by a dam to be built upstream at Maqarin. In 1978,

Israeli Water Policies Challenged

From the beginning, Israeli water policy has raised many moral as well as legal questions. The first was whether Israel was in fact bound by 1922, 1923 and 1926 French-British agreements regarding access to regional waters. While Israel maintained that it did not inherit treaties signed by the United Kingdom as a Mandate power, France and Britain stipulated that existing water rights of the region's inhabitants remain unimpaired. The issue was never legally resolved.

In addition, early attempts by Israel to divert the Jordan from within the DMZ appeared to breach the General Armistice Agreement between Israel and the Arab states, which stipulated:

1. The principle that no military or political advantage should be gained under the truce ordered by the Security Council;

2. It is also recognized that no provision of this agreement shall in any way prejudice the rights, claims and positions of either party in the ultimate peaceful settlement of the Palestine question.

The Arabs perceived Israel's early water projects as calculated to obtain political and military advantages in the DMZ, particularly in that they were designed to facilitate mass immigration for the express purpose of achieving military superiority. This issue was never satisfactorily resolved, although the U.N. Security Council concurred with Arab opinion and several times issued cease-work orders to Israel.

Disagreement over principles is reflected in the debate over water allocation by "prior apportionment," whereby old users must be satisfied before new claims are honored, versus "equitable apportionment." While the Arabs have stressed the first principle, the Israelis have invoked the second, albeit with their

own interpretations. According to Article III of the Helsinki Rules on Uses of Water of International Rivers, adopted by the International Law Association in 1966, "each basin is entitled, within its territory, to a reasonable and equitable share in the beneficial uses of the waters of an international drainage basin." Although no universal means of calculating "reasonable" or "equitable" was determined, a list was compiled of relevant factors to be considered in individual cases.⁴⁹ Applying this ruling to Palestine has been a fruitless exercise, however, since Israel's definition of "equitable" seems to be based upon a much lower per capita water consumption for Arabs than for Israelis. This effectively precludes any Arab water development or economic growth, an achievement which clearly is among Israel's primary regional goals.

Finally, there is the "moral" question of whether to keep river water in the watershed area, a course supported by the Arabs and most of the international community, or whether to divert the river, an alternative which Israel claims is justified by a lower water duty in the Negev.

Despite some ambiguity concerning these issues, customary international law and international legal opinion refute the legitimacy of most of Israel's water policies. For example, Israel has stressed the principle of absolute territorial sovereignty in conducting its water development activities—although it has repeatedly denied this right to Arabs undertaking unilateral actions within their own borders—while the Arabs have emphasized the principle of restricted territorial sovereignty in utilizing international rivers. According to L. Oppenheim, a well-respected authority on international law:

... The flow of not-national, bound-

dary, and international rivers is not within the arbitrary power of one of the riparian states, for it is the rule of international law that no state is allowed to alter the natural conditions of its own territory to the disadvantage of the natural conditions of the territory of a neighboring state. For this reason a state is not only forbidden to stop or divert the flow of a river which runs from its own to a neighboring state, but likewise to make such use of the water of the river as either causes danger to the neighboring state or prevents it from making proper use of the flow of the river on its part.⁵⁰

The validity of this view is furthered by U.N. documents which speak of the interdependence of riparian states:

When a stream forms the frontier of two states, neither of these states may, without the consent of the other... make or allow alterations therein detrimental to the territory of the other state. On the other hand, neither state may, on its own territory, utilize or allow the utilization of the water in such a way as seriously to interfere with its utilization by the other state.⁵¹

In other words, customary international opinion stipulates that the use of an international river is not an unfettered right of each sovereign riparian. National practices throughout the years have overwhelmingly recognized the norms of international law as defined above in the utilization of international waterways, and have denied the absolute territorial sovereignty to which Israel lays claim.

In October 1953, Eisenhower's Science Advisory Committee responded to Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's call for the settlement in Israel of an additional two million European Jews by warning that "this unrealistic approach can only lead to further economic and financial difficulties, and will probably result in additional pressure to expand Israel's frontiers into the rich lands of the Tigris and Euphrates Valley, and northward into the settled lands of Syria."⁵² Israel's

appropriation, time after time, of Arab property and water resources in abrogation of all commonly accepted international standards seems well on the way to realizing this dismal prospect. Heavy American financial assistance and passive acquiescence has enabled Israel to implement this policy, while, ironically, U.S. administrations since Eisenhower have optimistically assumed that a regional *modus vivendi* could be reached. From all perspectives—economic, political, and ideological—Israeli water policy continues to blatantly contradict the basis for this optimism, and if past history is any guide, little hope remains that the Lebanese might regain control over their southern water resources. Until the reality of Israeli water policy is addressed by U.S. policymakers, efforts to further peace in this troubled region will remain an exercise in futility.

Notes

1. "Provisional Verbatim Record of the Two Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty-Second Meeting," United Nations Security Council (S/VP 2552, August 30, 1984).
2. L'Etat Hebreu s'Appropriera a Detourner les Eaux du Hasani," *L'Orient du Jour* (Agence France Presse, August 14, 1984).
3. John K. Cooley, "The War over Water," *Foreign Policy* 54 (Spring 1984), p. 23.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 21-22.
6. This projection was calculated by the Israeli Water Commission, quoted in *Ha'aretz*, June 5, 1978, and cited by Hisham Awartani in "The Conflict on Water," an unpublished document, 1982.
7. Quoted from Herzl, *The Diaries*, p. 231 in Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), p. 120.
8. Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), p. 92.
9. Kamel Zuhairi, "Development Projects in the Nile Valley and Israeli Water Objectives" (paper presented at the Joint International Symposium on Israel and Arab Waters, Yarmuk University Liaison Office, Amman, February 25-26, 1984).
10. Wiermann, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
11. Pro-Zionist Mandate officials included the heads of the Immigration Department, Lands Department (a Christian of Jewish origin), Customs Department, Legal Department (encompassing the positions of Attorney-

General and Legal Advisor to the Government), and the Secretariat (including the High Commissioner). (Geoffrey Furlonge, *Palestine is My Country: The Story of Musa Alami*. London: Murray, 1969, p. 90.)

12. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

13. This is a statement made by Winston Churchill, documented in the text "Mavrommah's Jerusalem Concessions" and "Legal Questions Arising Out of the Construction of a Dam at Maqarin on the Yarmuk River," report on a working group established by the American Society of International Law under contract AID/NE-C-1256, 1977, p. 158.

14. Palestine was not, as Zionists well knew, uninhabited, and maps published by Israeli sources demonstrate the absurdity of this idea. The *Atlas of Israel*, published under Israeli auspices, shows as many as 725 Arab villages in 1878, while British Mandate maps suggest that there may have been twice this number. (Edward F. Henderson, *Maps and Mythology: What Israeli Records Reveal About the Land and Peoples of Palestine*. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Trust, 1982, p. 12.)

15. According to Joel S. Migdal in *Palestinian Society and Politics*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980, p. 38), Palestinian refugees in 1949 consisted of about 100,000 in Lebanon, 83,000 in Syria, 200,000 in Gaza under Egyptian rule, and 450,000 in the West Bank. M.G. Ionides ("The Disputed Waters of the Jordan," *Middle East Journal*, 1953, p. 156) calculates a figure of 880,000. According to the Government of Palestine's *Vital Statistics Table 1922-1945*, published in 1947, the Arab population in Palestine in 1940 was 1,081,000. (Dov Friedlander and Calvin Goldscheider, *The Population of Israel*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979, pp. 30-34.)

16. James B. Hayes, T.V.A., on the Jordan: *Proposals for Irrigation and Hydroelectric Development in Palestine* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1948), pp. 18-19.

17. Sir M. MacDonald and Partners, *Report on the Proposed Extension of Irrigation in the Jordan Valley* (1951), p. 1.

18. *Israeli Government Yearbook* (1958), p. 61.

19. Georgania Stevens, *Jordan River Partition* (Hoover Institution Studies 6, 1965), p. 7.

20. E.L.M. Burns, *Between Arab and Israeli* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969), p. 290.

21. Hayes, *op. cit.*, introduction.

22. Stephen Green, *Taking Sides* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1984), p. 78.

23. Stevens, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

24. Syria again in 1957 complained that Israel was using police and setting up mines and military fortifications while building a bridge in the zone, stating that this broke the military status quo as well as other provisions of the Armistice Agreement. Israel responded that the

bridge was merely to facilitate land reclamation work, and the UNTSO Chief of Staff thus asked Israel to cease the mine installations and military fortifications. The renewed flare-up of hostilities in 1958 was resolved when Israel agreed to the U.N. request to realign the drainage ditch in order to bypass Arab-owned land. (Fred J. Khouri, "Friction and Conflict on the Israeli-Syrian Frontier," *Middle East Journal* XVII, 1963, p. 23.)

25. "Legal Questions... Yarmuk River," p. 165.

26. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

27. Michael Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 180.

28. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 89-90.

31. According to the 1923 Agreement, "The Government of Palestine or persons authorized by the said government shall have the right to build a dam to raise the level of the Lakes Huleh and Tiberias above their normal level, on condition that they pay fair compensation to the owner and occupiers of the lands which will thus be flooded. . . . Any existing rights over the use of the waters of the Jordan by the inhabitants of Syria shall be maintained unimpaired."

The 1926 Agreement, meanwhile, stipulated that "All the inhabitants, whether settled or semi-nomadic, of both territories who, at the date of the signature of this agreement enjoy grazing, watering or cultivation rights, or own land on the one or the other side of the frontier shall continue to exercise their rights as in the past."

32. In the 1953 seven-year plan, "local and regional sources" were to provide 380 mcm of the envisioned increase in water, while the Jordan River and its tributaries were to provide the remaining 540 mcm (340 mcm from the Jordan River). The ten-year plan intended to take a full 500 mcm from the Upper Jordan.

The National Water Carrier was completed in 1964. In addition to the canal system, it consists of about 4,000 wells and 80 regional water projects.

33. Israel, Ministry of Labour, "Irrigation," *Atlas of Israel* (Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing, 1970), p. XIII.2.

34. *Jerusalem Post*, August 15, 1962, as quoted in Edward Rizk, *The River Jordan* (New York: Arab Information Center, Information Paper 23, 1964), p. 30.

35. Yoram Nimrod, "The Jordan's Angry Waters," *New Outlook* 8:5 (July 1965), p. 41.

36. Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 195. Johnston himself echoed this view, stating that "every year a billion cubic meters of precious water will roll down the ancient stream, wasted, to the Dead Sea."

37. Anton Aved Naber, "The Arab-Israeli Water Conflict" (Ph.D. dissertation, 1968), p. 70.

38. Hisham Awartani, "Water Resour-

- ces and Policies in the West Bank," *Samed el-Iqtadi*, Vol. 3 (August 1980), p. 14. (Arabic)
39. Meron Benvenisti, *The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984), p. 14.
40. Amihod Israeli, "Control of Water Resources," *Kirdom* (September 1979). (Hebrew)
41. Benvenisti, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
42. *Ibid.*
43. Awartani, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
44. Emile Sahliyah, "West Bank Indus-

- trial and Agricultural Development: The Basic Problems," *Journal of Palestine Studies* XI:2 (Winter 1982), p. 66.
45. Uri Davis, Antonia E.L. Marks, and John Richardson, "Israel's Water Policies," *Journal of Palestine Studies* IX:2 (Winter 1980), p. 5.
46. Zuhairi, *op. cit.*
47. *President Sadat Orders a Comprehensive Study on Transporting the Waters of the Nile to Jerusalem: The "New Zamzam Project,"* October 164 (December 16, 1979). (Arabic)
48. Ya'acov Friedler, "Israel to Draw Full

- Allocation from Yarmuk," *Jerusalem Post* (April 4, 1984).
49. "Legal Questions... Yarmuk River," p. 54.
50. Lassa F. Oppenheim, *International Law: A Treatise* (London: Longmans, Green, 8th ed., 1955), pp. 474-75.
51. These statements were adopted by the U.N. from suggestions made years before (1911) by the Institute of International Law. (*U.N. Statements on International Law Regarding Water* (1911), pp. 512-36, A/5409.)
52. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Book Views

Islam and Politics

By John L. Esposito

Syracuse University Press, 1984, 288 pp., \$12.95

By John Voll

The relationship between Islam and politics is a subject which received little scholarly attention in the West until a few years ago. Almost any book on the subject by an intelligent observer was welcome.

The situation has now changed. There are many books on the modern Islamic experience, most of which discuss, to some extent, Islam's relations to politics. At least three easily available books have been published specifically on this subject since 1982 (James Piscatori, ed., *Islam in the Political Process*; Edward Mortimer, *Faith and Power: The Politics of Islam*; and Daniel Pipes, *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power*).

The basic question about any new book on this topic is whether or not it adds significantly to existing literature. On this basis, John Esposito's *Islam and Politics* should be welcomed for a number of reasons. Esposito provides a sound historical context for a discussion of the basic themes of modern Islamic politics. He provides more than a description of events and movements. He presents a remarkably thorough summary of the intellectual content and significant ideas of important modern Islamic groups.

One of the most important characteristics of Esposito's analysis is that he takes modern Muslims seriously,

as Muslims. In contrast to some other scholars, he does not seem to be looking beyond Islam to some other explanation for developments in modern Muslim societies. The current mood of Islamic revivalism, for example, is not seen as "really" being the product of nationalist sentiments or socio-economic forces at work in an emerging class structure. For some readers this will appear a weakness but for others it will be a welcome recognition that religious faith continues to be a strong force in contemporary history. The readers of *Islam and Politics* should know from the outset that Esposito is not a political scientist or a sociologist. He brings the perspectives of a scholar of the history of religions to this study. Whether or not a person fully accepts these perspectives, the reader will recognize the distinctive contribution that Esposito makes, adding to the insights of political scientists, sociologists and informed journalists.

The subject of the relationship between Islam and politics is a complex one. The reader who hopes to get a thorough understanding of this topic without having to think and deal with new ideas, concepts and terms is engaging in dangerous wishful thinking. Discussions of this subject which are so oversimplified that the reader never has to deal with "foreign" names and terms will probably mislead the reader in the same way that potboiler explanations of Einstein's theory of relativity used to make people think that they "really

knew" what Einstein was talking about. Esposito spares the reader the overuse of highly technical terms but he presents his analysis with sophistication that does not insult the intelligence of the general reader in search of a basic understanding. Sometimes the use of the actual term used by Muslims is easier for the general reader to understand than the circumlocutions that are sometimes forced on authors in the effort to avoid using "foreign terms."

The organization of *Islam and Politics* is a useful combination of chronological presentation and topical discussions supported by case studies. The book opens with a general discussion of basic themes and historical background. Chapter 2 deals with basic movements and issues of revival and reform in the 18th and 19th centuries. Chapters 3 and 4 cover some of the most critical conceptual issues. The experiences of nationalist movements in the Arab world, Iran and India are discussed. Esposito then presents a variety of case studies of relations between Islam and state structures, closing with a presentation of the "Islamic alternatives" provided by the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jama'at-i-Islami in Pakistan. Contemporary Islamic politics as seen in Libya, Pakistan, Iran and Egypt are the focus of the sixth chapter. In the final chapter, Esposito draws together the many themes of this analysis in a summary conclusion discussing Islamic issues and prospects.

It is useful to have a study that

does not try to reduce the modern Islamic experiences to the basic categories of Western social sciences. However, Esposito's efforts show the difficulty of this task. One theme in this analysis is the profound linkage between the "political realm" and Islamic beliefs and symbols. In this context, as many have noted, it is not possible to separate religion from politics or "church" from "state." Yet, in discussing this situation, the very words that are used (e.g., "religion") imply a separate autonomy that the author is saying does not exist. Esposito goes farther in overcoming this problem than most authors but he shows that there is still a long way to go before it is solved.

Islam and Politics expands the arena of discussion of this important subject. Its general character and the style of Esposito's presentation make the book useful to the general reader. At the same time, the perspectives of the author should make this book of interest to the specialist as well.

John Voll is Professor of History at the University of New Hampshire and author of *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World*.

Corrections

The following are corrections for errors in the August/September issue of *The Link*:

Page 1, column 1, lines 24 and 25: "400 million Arab Muslims" should read "150 million Arab Muslims"; "600 million non-Arab Muslims" should read "over 800 million non-Arab Muslims."

Page 3, column 1, line 27: "400 million Arabs" should read "400 [sic] million Arabs."

Notice

A.M.E.U. is offering a 24" x 37" full-color wall map depicting the economic and political climate of the West Bank/Gaza Strip under Israeli occupation. The map identifies, with commentary, the refugee camps, municipalities, and 123 illegal settlements. Our price, \$2.00. Write: A.M.E.U., Room 771, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

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□ Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, *Palestinian Rights: Affirmation and Denial*, Medina Press, 225 pp., \$7.95. In this book of essays, seventeen distinguished international scholars examine, analyze and detail Palestinian national rights, including their right to national identity, sovereignty in Palestine, return and representation. The international assessment and response to these rights and their violation by Israel are carefully probed and documented. Our price, \$3.95.

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□ Richard Curtis, *A Changing Image: American Perceptions of the Arab-Israeli Dispute*, American Educational Trust, Washington, D.C., 1982, 216 pp., \$9.95. Traces the evolution of American public opinion on the Arab-Israeli conflict; concludes that it is becoming more balanced, and that this trend will continue. Our price, \$7.25.

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□ Basheer Nijim, ed., *American Church Politics and the Middle East*. Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Belmont, MA, 1982, 156 pp., \$6.95. Exam-

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