

sibilities of diverting the headwaters of the Jordan southwards to 'Israel'.

After the 1967 June war, the Israelis immediately placed much of the Mount Hermon basin and the entire West Bank under their control. This enabled 'Israel' to divert most of these fresh waters to irrigation in 'Israel' and to their settlements in the Jordan Valley, leaving mostly the saline drain waters to be discharged from Lake Tiberias into the river's natural channel. They conquered the Yarkow and the Crocodile - the sources of up to 40% of the water used in 'Israel'. The Golan's own water resources are not significant, but the commanding position of the Golan over the Mount Hermon basin and the Jordan headwaters secured 'Israel' 400 million cubic meters of water for use elsewhere. This amount roughly coincides with the increase in Israeli water consumption since the mid 60s.

In the 1967 war 'Israel' captured the Banias in Syria and set the stage tactically and geographically for its later push into Lebanon to seize the Litani river, finally carried out in June 1982. By the end of its temporary incursion of 1978 into South Lebanon, 'Israel' controlled all the Jordan headwaters including the Wazzani, and had placed Major Haddad's militia men in charge of the other aquifers, springs and rivulets which either feed into 'Israel' or can be made to do so.

This vast amount of stolen water matches some of the ambitious aspirations of the Zionist movement in 1919. In fact, the two blue lines of the Israeli flag symbolize the Nile and the Euphrates, the Zionist state claims that this area definitely belongs to «Eretz Israel».

The constant Israeli water shortage

The constant Israeli water shortage cannot be understood without relating this to the nature of the Israeli state. The settlement policy, another word for expansionism, drives it continuously to seek more water and more resources generally.

Geographically speaking, occupied Palestine represents a point of transition between the relatively moist climate of Lebanon and the arid conditions of the Negev and the Sinai deserts. The country's water resources are not manifold and 85% are concentrated north of Tel Aviv. However, at the time 'Israel' was established in 1948, water usage stood at 350 million cubic meters, just over 20% of estimated capacity. At the moment 'Israel' is using 95% of its potential capacity, the potential in this case including the stolen waters from the above mentioned areas. 'Israel' uses about 5 times as much water as its neighbouring countries.

The Israeli colonization plan for the Golan envisages a population of 50,000 by 1985 consuming 46 million cubic meters of water yearly - a 300% increase over the total consumption which had supported a Syrian population twice that size in 1967 (93% of the 100,000 Syrians in the Golan were expelled to Syria in 1967).

According to Israeli authorities domestic consumption needs will rise between 500 and 700 million cubic meters per year over the next decade. Since present resources are fully exploited and technological alternatives are too expensive to contemplate on a large scale in this time span, the Israelis will either have to steal water from beyond its present borders, or shift a third of the amount of water now used in the agricultural sector to domestic and municipal consumption. Considering the effects of the deep Israeli economic crisis and the nucleus of Israeli policy being settlements and kibbutzim, there is no way they can consider such a shift. So where is all the water going to come from?

The Litani

When confronted with accusations of attempting to steal waters from the Litani, Israeli leaders as Ariel Sharon have tried to show lack of interest, referring to the river as «barely a trickle». Yet if 'Israel' starts to divert Litani water, Lebanese water engineers estimate they could take about 100 million cubic meter a year (from the 700 million cubic meters the «trickle» produces). This would meet current Israeli water needs. This could be done by diverting Litani water through a tunnel bored from the Israeli side, passing almost directly under the Lebanese village Kfar Kela and emerging deep in the Litani gorge below Deir Mimas, just before the river bends westwards. To secure this diversion, 'Israel' would have to stay in Lebanon, and hold at least the entire Beka'a valley south of the Damascus road to protect Lake Karaoun from attacks and preempt Lebanese use of the water.

Too far-fetched? Zionist history is full of examples proving that Zionist rulers did not consider the idea 'far-fetched' at all. For instance Moshe Sharret, former Israeli Prime Minister, noted in his diary in 1955 «According to him (Moshe Dayan) the only thing that is necessary is to find an officer, even just a major. We should either win his heart or buy him with money,

Children splash in a main water source in Al Ouja village, occupied Palestine



Women collect water from the spring at Ain Arik village, occupied Palestine. Palestinian health professionals charge the military government with not securing running water to the villages or most of the West Bank towns, and instead making it immediately available to the new Jewish settlements constructed in the midst of Arab areas.