

and a fourth in 2025. And you can be sure that advancing technology will reduce the unit cost of water produced by each successive plant in the series.

Thus, instead of carrying idle plants for decades, adding immeasurably to the cost of our water, we will invest money only when it is needed and on a descending scale of unit cost. I happen to think that is more than an adequate substitute for the abandoned alternative of importation.

Incidentally, I understand that your big new desalting plant off the coast will produce fresh water for about \$70 per acre foot. That's considerably less than the \$80 to \$200 price for Columbia River water.

The second method of augmentation I mentioned was weather modification. I find this so exciting that I think a few years from now we will wonder why we spent so much time arguing about whose share of the river had priority over other shares; there will be enough to meet all uses, including what we call the Mexican Treaty Burden. I won't weight you down with that matter except to say that we have to guarantee 1.5 million acre feet to Mexico, and in a water-short year we worry about which states are going to have to relinquish the most water. Well, weather modification—not here in Southern California or in Arizona either, for that matter, but rather in the headwaters of river basins such as the upper slopes of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado—may end those arguments. Through cloud seeding additional snowfall can be produced in these watersheds, increasing the spring thaw and ultimate river flow. This technology is progressing so rapidly that the Department of Interior suggests full-scale programs will be in operation in the next decade.

While any cost figure on such a program must be pretty rough right now, it has been estimated that additional streamflow can be generated at a cost of around \$1 to \$4 an acre foot. Compare that with the \$80 to \$200 for Columbia River water and the \$70 for desalted water.

You can see from these figures that it would be a mistake to tie ourselves here and now either to a vast system of import works or to a precise schedule of construction on desalting plants when a much cheaper option may become available in 10 years or less.

This brings me to the third alternative available to us, and that is the salvage and conservation of existing water in the Lower Basin. If someone said he knew of a secret underground river which would add, right now, 1.5 million acre feet of water annually to the Colorado River—enough, for example, to satisfy that Mexican Treaty burden—I'm sure you would say, "Let's go after it." Well, there is no underground river, but there is something almost as good. Every year the irrigation districts of the Imperial and Coachella valleys run off as drainage and waste, some of it never having touched an irrigable acre, over a million acre feet of usable water. While I realize this is a subject concerning my friends in the Imperial Valley are understandably sensitive, I think this waste needs to be looked at. It includes drainage water, tail water and so-called "regulatory waste."

There are other ways in which we could get more use out of the water already existing in the Lower Basin. Every year more than three-quarters of a million acre feet of reclaimable sewage effluent is wasted in Arizona and Southern California—water which could be reused for agriculture with the resulting savings of an equal amount of potable water for domestic and municipal use.

Then there are still large amounts of mainstream water lost each year between Hoover Dam and Mexico through its absorption by salt cedars and other water-loving plants which are still permitted to grow along and in the river bed.

These are some of the avenues that are available to us and which ought to be getting our attention. They offer us more than adequate means to "make whole", as they say, the Colorado River Basin, to augment its water supply to the point that all shares can be utilized and new increments added with the passing of years.

III

Now to review briefly. I have already covered the first two of those four essentials I said could be written on the back of an envelope. They were the Arizona aqueduct and augmentation. Now we come to the third, which was how we raise the money. Last year our plan was to build two big power dams to provide a basin fund. Since these dams are now out of the question, where can we get the money to do these things we have to do? Well, let's see.

The Central Arizona Project bill, as it passed the Senate, takes a big step in this direction. It sets up the same basin fund we proposed last year, but without the revenues from the Grand Canyon dams. Going into that fund will be all