

swers yet. The States, I think quite rightly, raised this as a basic question. I think the whole region has to be much more conscious of the needs for a regimen of water quality management from now on. We have to find ways, if we can through scientific research, of minimizing the deterioration of quality and of maintaining the river.

This is another reason why we feel strongly that ultimately, a desalination project in the estuary of the Colorado River, with the introduction of pure water for blending purposes, may very well be a must and may very well be a fine solution to the problem.

Mr. TUNNEY. Located above what point?

Secretary UDALL. Well, it would be located in Mexico. This is the one we have been studying for a year and a half with the Mexican Government.

Mr. TUNNEY. Where would the water be put into the Colorado River?

Secretary UDALL. Probably above the border with some perhaps blended in at the border.

Mr. TUNNEY. What about the people who are farming just above the border?

Secretary UDALL. Well, it might be put in at a point to benefit them. I am not prejudging that.

Mr. TUNNEY. I don't want to be excessively chauvinistic but I personally am more concerned about American farmers than I am about Mexican farmers.

Secretary UDALL. I would expect you to be.

Mr. TUNNEY. I would anticipate that if there were such a blending, it would take place at a point where it could help American farmers rather than Mexican farmers.

Secretary UDALL. It is not such a problem to begin, for example, at Imperial Valley rather than at the border. What I am saying is if the quality deteriorates to a certain point, it may very well be that the Imperial irrigation district has a problem that is just as severe as the problem that the Yuma farmers and the Mexicali Valley farmers in Mexico have, and that we have to have a solution for all of them.

Mr. DOMINY. As a matter of fact, Congressman Tunney, our reconnaissance study indicates that we probably would have to put that desalted water, whether we got in the Gulf of California or the coast of California in the United States, as far north as Mojave in order to get the kind of mixing that would prevent users from getting desalted water one day and a thousand parts per million the next. This you could not live with under any circumstances.

Mr. TUNNEY. I should ask the Secretary this question:

To your knowledge, Mr. Secretary, are there any serious negotiations, hard negotiations, going on now with the Mexican Government regarding a desalination plant in southern California?

Secretary UDALL. We actually set up the desalination conference in 1966 in Washington. We announced at that time the signing of an agreement with Mexico on that study. The study has been going on since then. We have made some headway on it. It is a big project. We will also have the international atomic energy agency in the picture. So we are working on this. This is not something that is abstract. We are trying to lay out the parameters now and we are very active in this.