

COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROJECT

Part II

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON IRRIGATION AND RECLAMATION
OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:50 a.m., in room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, the Honorable Harold T. Johnson (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. JOHNSON. The subcommittee will come to order.

We will start off this morning with further questioning by Congressman Tunney of California.

Mr. TUNNEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, statements have been made in the past by some of my more able colleagues, as well as certain so-called experts in the Southwest, that the Imperial Irrigation District and the Coachella Irrigation District are pouring 1,320,000 acre-feet of usable water into the Salton Sea. Now, if this is true, and inasmuch as there is only a pump lift of about 240 feet from the Salton Sea to the Colorado River, why is it that the Department of the Interior has not suggested a plan to take this water, this used irrigation water, from the New River as it flows into the Salton Sea, and put it back into the Colorado River?

Now, it is my understanding that inasmuch as we are entitled, California is entitled to 4.4 million acre-feet and we also have diversions less returns, if we could only divert 4.4 million acre-feet now, but if we returned the 1,320,000 acre-feet, we would be entitled to a total allotment of 5,720,000 acre-feet from the river. This would satisfy all water needs in southern California.

The whole thrust of the question goes to the statement that has been made that this 1,320,000 acre-feet is usable water and is just flowing into the Salton Sea. Why, if this is true, has not the Department come up with a plan to return this water to the Colorado River today?