

Mr. FOLEY. Actually, in terms of precise answers, you have been able to estimate today down to a tenth of a cent in the reconnaissance study—not a feasibility study—the oceanside cost of desalting. It is not asking too much, then, to get your judgments in these areas without a reconnaissance study; is it?

Mr. DOMINY. I think in the terms of the generalities you and I are discussing, these are within practical limits.

Mr. FOLEY. As the chairman pointed out, there is no limitation on the Department conducting reconnaissance studies.

Mr. DOMINY. That is correct.

Mr. FOLEY. And if reconnaissance studies give you within a 10 percentile accuracy, that ought to be enough in terms of costs?

Mr. DOMINY. Yes.

Mr. FOLEY. Actually, what we are talking about, Mr. Commissioner, in terms of augmentation is not just the availability of quantities of water of such quality. But the critical question is really cost, is it not, when you are talking about augmenting water to the Colorado River?

Mr. DOMINY. Yes; certainly augmentation has to be within the realm of favorable benefit-cost ratio and where pertinent, within the realm of the ability of the users to take it, use it, and pay for it.

Mr. FOLEY. Are there not a number of technologies now that would provide augmentation if attempted?

Mr. DOMINY. Well, the only two that of course—

Mr. FOLEY. Based on projected time needs involved.

Mr. DOMINY (continuing). The only two that we know of at the moment would be the desalinization and of course our continued weather modification with which we hope to add additional snow in the mountains of the drainage system.

Your colleague from California, Congressman Hosmer, mentioned the possibilities of underground atomic explosion to create additional ground water sources. This is the third one that certainly can be looked into.

Mr. FOLEY. With all these available and promising means of augmentation, is not the real question which is the cheapest?

Mr. DOMINY. I think this is true. Of course, we cannot overlook the fact that the future growth needs of the Pacific Southwest would require more than just augmenting the river to the tune of 2.5 million acre-feet.

Mr. FOLEY. But our present focus here is on augmentation, not on responding to the future needs of the Southwest.

Mr. DOMINY. That is right.

Mr. FOLEY. In that context, it is your opinion, is it not, that if we were looking to costs, we would have to place diversions from the Pacific Northwest as the most expensive of the current suggested means of augmentation?

Mr. DOMINY. When you are thinking in terms of 2.5 million acre-feet; I think this is correct.

Mr. FOLEY. Turning for a moment to weather modification, do I understand that the Department continues to be encouraged by studies of the potential of weather modification as a means of augmenting water supply?

Secretary UDALL. As we have indicated all along, we think we have a very fine research program going. If we continue to get the money needed to scale it up and to get all the answers, it is our anticipation