

operation and maintenance of this plant be a Federal responsibility. On the other hand, the Bureau of the Budget and the Secretary of the Army took the view that this plant should be operated and maintained by local interests. Their reasons for this recommendation are not entirely clear in their forwarding letters, but would appear to be based on the proposition that local interests had benefited from the drainage projects which had caused the siltation damage to Lake Chicot, the condition which the proposed project would correct. No doubt in many situations, such a rationale might be applicable, but it is not appropriate in the instant case, as we believe we can demonstrate to the Committee's satisfaction.

It is our request that the Committee authorize the project on the basis of the local cooperation recommended by the Chief of Engineers which, in brief, requires local interests to operate and maintain the required recreational facilities; provide all lands needed for specific recreational facilities; make additional contributions as necessary to bring the local interest contribution to not less than 50% of all recreation costs, and to maintain and operate certain control structures in two streams included in the project area. You will note that the presently estimated cost of the local contribution is \$530,000 plus annual cost of the maintenance requirements recommended by the Corps of Engineers.

There are three very substantial reasons to justify the operation and maintenance of this plant by the Federal Government.

The first of these is that the operation of this pumping plant will require experts in a number of technical disciplines which are not available to the local interests and which would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. The operation of a large pumping plant such as this, involving, as it does, stages in both the Mississippi River and interior streams over a wide area in two states, is not a simple process. I am advised that rather difficult flood flow computations and predictions requiring highly specialized personnel in hydraulics and hydrology are very necessary elements in such an operation. Such experts already are in the employ of the Corps of Engineers and regularly perform such functions in connection with day to day operation. Even if such experts could be employed readily by local interests, there would be such a limited need for their services as to make their employment uneconomical and impractical in the larger sense. There are other technical disciplines involved—mechanical and electrical engineers, for example—which are available through regular employment in the Corps of Engineers. I believe the Corps of Engineers would substantiate the fact that it would be far more economical and efficient for this operation to be undertaken by them because of these technical considerations.

Let me now explore another of the reasons for accepting the recommendation of the Chief of Engineers having to do with the matter of specific identification of the local interests involved. As I indicated earlier, the Bureau of the Budget predicates its recommendation on the premise that since local interests received the benefits from the works which damaged Lake Chicot, they are, therefore, obligated to maintain and operate the pumping plant. Actually, the situation is not that simple. The local drainage district directly involved with Lake Chicot is comparatively small and the benefits it has received from the Boeuf-Tensas Project have been insignificant at best. On the other hand, the detriment to that district has been great, as reflected in the report. The drainage benefits have accrued over some 350 square miles above Lake Chicot and within the confines of other agencies in Arkansas. In addition, use of Lake Chicot as a detention basin substantially controls flood flows in Louisiana. In brief, this means that the original project benefits accrue over a wide area of two states and beyond the jurisdiction for taxing and other administrative purposes of the specific district which would be called upon to operate and maintain the pumping plant. It does not appear equitable for those in the immediate area to be obligated to pay for damages inflicted upon them for the benefit of others, some even in another state.

It is not necessary for me to enlarge on the third reason for accepting the recommendation of the Corps of Engineers primarily because it is set forth in the report where attention is called to the fact that that . . . "Congress has made the operation and maintenance of other large pumping plants in the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project, such as the ones in Red River Backwater, White River Backwater, and the St. Francis Basin, a Federal responsibility. The Mississippi River Commission feels that this policy should also be applied to the pumping plant designed to restore Lake Chicot."