

Army Corps of Engineers, and in cooperation with the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior, is authorized to complete a full and expeditious study of the potentials for water supply for the United States, and to draw up engineering plans and specifications for the solutions determined to meet the long-range water needs, both of the Southwest and Great Plains states for agriculture and other consumptive uses, and of the entire nation for water transport.

The solution adopted is to be assessed by the following criteria:

1) It must supply sufficient water to the region of the Ogallala aquifer that irrigation and the expansion of irrigated acreage can continue, with appropriate consideration of avoiding soil salinity by overlimiting water application, while ending the mining of water from the aquifer, and moving toward aquifer recharge in areas where significant deterioration in water availability has been experienced;

2) It must supply sufficient water to the Colorado River Basin and the areas now receiving water from the Colorado River that a) no user of Colorado River water shall be forced to decrease his use of water from the river, but instead normal and healthy growth in industrial and agricultural use can be met; b) the quality of the Colorado River is returned to an acceptable level for general consumptive use; and c) sufficient overirrigation is possible such that accumulated saline deposits can be flushed out of the soils which have been adversely affected;

3) It must provide, in association with existing and currently authorized projects, an integrated system of flood control for the Western Great Plains region, and of flow management for the Mississippi and Missouri rivers such that the navigational use of these waterways can be significantly upgraded by higher assured rates of flow;

4) It must provide for the eventual integration of the abundant water resources of the state of Alaska into our national system, with the associated economic benefits to Alaska and the recipient states;

5) It must be capable of supplying significant additional amounts of water to the Republic of Mexico, if such supply is requested by our ally, without detriment to U.S. users.

In drawing up this plan, consideration shall be given to the immediate necessity of reversing the loss of irrigated agricultural lands, both in the southern High Plains areas and in the valleys of California. However, this Act shall not be used to design projects having only the capability of ameliorating these situations, but only to determine which sequence of construction will most expeditiously address them.

In order to carry out the preliminary assessment and the engineering study of the solution deemed most appropriate to the criteria outlined above, the sum of \$10,000,000 is allocated.

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## Interview

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# CEQ's Hill discusses a new 'balance'

*The following interview with Alan Hill, the new chairman of the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ), was conducted by EIR's Stanley Ezrol on Aug. 11.*

**Ezrol:** Is there a change in the philosophy of the CEQ?

**Hill:** No, I really don't think so. . . . The transition paper on the council listed a multitude of options—elimination, retention as is, reduction. The decision was to go with a council of reduced resources primarily because the council over the past few years has tended to become involved in matters that really should be performed by a line agency—areas of concern, areas of study, rather than being an agency which has the ability to look over the entire government and provide advice to the President. . . .

**Ezrol:** Are you saying that the differences are mainly administrative?

**Hill:** Well, we're relating to budget action. When you get into other areas, I have been told by a multitude of people that the last chairman of the council tended to pay attention to the environmental community almost exclusively. I feel that to arrive at a solid decision you talk to any interested parties. . . . I've consistently said to the environmental community, to the business community, "My door is open, you have my phone number. Let me hear from you if you have a problem, or something you want to discuss."

**Ezrol:** What do you see as the CEQ's major concerns?

**Hill:** I have had a concern initially with how the law is used. Very few people go back and take a look at the actual language of the law because aside from taking a preservationist stance, it also says some things about balance. People in this country are entitled to some economic growth, some economic development on a balanced basis, and we tend to ignore that when we get into a strict preservationist mode. . . .

You know we only do about 700 EIS's a year

throughout the federal government, but I was talking to a Forest Service man here the other day—they do more than 13,000. I said, “What the heck for?” typically, they’re going to replace a culvert somewhere on an existing road system; they do an environmental assessment. I said, “Why?” There’s been an overreaction because in an existing road system, the replacement of a culvert generally doesn’t have a major environmental impact.

That’s the first major area. Secondly, we have found that there is a question about coordination of policy with regard to acid rain, or acid precipitation. A lot of agencies have had their fingers in the pie, but no one agency has assumed the leadership to-gather together the loose ends. . . .

**Ezrol:** Is there discussion of lifting the ban on DDT?

**Hill:** There hasn’t been as of yet. I have talked informally with people on the White House staff and certain other agencies on what basis has a federal policy with regard not just to DDT, but all sorts of chemicals, been formulated. Was it on a true, solid, scientific basis, or was it an emotional, get-the-good-headline, basis? It gets back into the whole question of a clear review of scientific work. To me that’s how you get at the truth: submit it to this very tough review.

**Ezrol:** The CEQ is now in the process of preparing a review of the state of the national environment.

**Hill:** It’s the annual report, it’s required by law. As a matter of fact we’ve got no way to avoid it. Now what we are doing is trying to keep the end report strictly to the statutorily required items—a review of air and water quality trends, those types of things.

**Ezrol:** Let me ask you about one specific published policy. During the last administration, the CEQ, in cooperation with the State Department and other federal agencies, prepared a report called *Global 2000* and a related document called *Global Futures*. Does this administration support the outlook expressed in those reports?

**Hill:** *Global Futures* is Gus Speth’s, Jimmy Carter’s and Edmund Muskie’s thoughts for the future. What do you think? [laughs] There’s a lot of controversy with the *Global 2000* report. I’ve divided my thoughts into two basic categories. One is more what I call mechanical and that is, “Are the government’s forecasting skills properly developed?” I think the answer to anyone is, “No. We don’t have very good forecasting skills at this point.” We need some effort in that area specifically, and I’m talking about working within specific dollars.

It’s very obvious on the issues side that anyone who accepts the concept “If present trends continue” doesn’t understand the nature of life, especially life in the United States. The history of our country has been one of

innovation, an individual’s being awarded for developing something new, or better, or whatever. I tend towards looking to our economic system to solve some of this. How can the United States be of assistance? That’s a question, within existing dollars. . . . The question of population is a very difficult one because it raises some basic moral questions. Individuals will differ on approaches. . . . I would hate personally for us to give over any of our sovereignty to another body to make decisions as far as what we should do.

**Ezrol:** The President signed a communiqué at the end of the Ottawa summit in which among other things he agreed to the proposition that there would have to be an adjustment in the expectations of workers regarding wages and living standards. He also endorsed the concept of global negotiations.

**Hill:** There are discussions going on about that issue at this point; because it is a matter of developing policy, I cannot discuss that.

**Ezrol:** Under the previous administration, the CEQ did play a role in what have come to be known as global issues. “Global issues” is a concept which the Club of Rome claims it developed. When the CEQ was called on to prepare the *Global 2000 Report*, it commissioned Gerald Barney, a member of the U.S. Association for the Club of Rome, to be the study director for that report. As a matter of fact, according to Club of Rome officials, the report was largely prepared at their offices a few blocks away from here in Washington.

**Hill:** I’m not aware of all that you’re telling me. I could probably dig that out of the files, the *Global 2000* files, the study group files. I don’t know.

**Ezrol:** The question I’m getting at concerns a neo-fascist organization, the Club of Rome, which has international arms in the United States and elsewhere. During the Carter administration, the CEQ turned over a large part of its responsibilities to members of that organization in this country.

**Hill:** That I don’t know, but I can tell you in *this* council it won’t happen.

**Ezrol:** As a general principle do you accept the view that the state of nature should be static and unchanging?

**Hill:** This goes back and back and back; should man be allowed to do *anything*? I don’t agree with that type of thing. But did you see Jim Buckley’s piece on the snail darter thing? This diversity issue, it’s a valid point. The question is, do we allow something to stop development? It has to depend on what that something is, and the fellow who found the first snail darter I hope was the fellow that found the others 80 miles away. . . . There’s got to be some balance.