

(English text of Minute 238 dated September 10, 1970)

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

Ciudad Juárez, Chih.,
September 10, 1970.

MINUTE NO. 238

IMPROVEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL FLOOD CONTROL WORKS
OF THE LOWER RIO GRANDE

The Commission met in the offices of the Mexican Section at Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, at 2:00 p.m. on September 10, 1970, to consider the improvement required by the international flood control works on the Lower Rio Grande in the light of experience gained in the flood of 1958, and that of 1967 which resulted from Hurricane Beulah and caused extensive damages in the two countries.

The Commission found that that experience, coupled with the increase in population and expansion of urban and agricultural developments in the two countries along the Rio Grande since the Flood Control Plan was adopted by it in 1933, demonstrates the need to improve the works so as to control floods of greater magnitude than those that had been anticipated.

The Commission reviewed the "Joint Report of the Principal Engineers on Improvement of the International Flood Control Works on the Lower Rio Grande," submitted by Principal Engineers Delbert D. McNealy and Norberto Sánchez G. under date of September 10, 1970, the English and Spanish texts of which, together with their exhibits, are attached hereto and form a part hereof.

The Commission agreed that there is need to improve the United States and Mexican floodways and their respective inlets in order to effect equal diversions of floodwaters of the Rio Grande through each of them so that flood flows reaching Brownsville-Matamoros do not exceed the capacity of the river at that location; that there is need for a second diversion dam in the Rio Grande to assure diversion of water to the Mexican floodway, as the Anzaldúas Diversion Dam constructed pursuant to the Commission's Minutes Nos. 196 and 203, dated December 18, 1950 and December 23, 1955, respectively, serves to assure diversions to the United States floodway; that there is need to improve the levees of the two countries along the Lower Rio Grande. The Commission agreed that the Joint Report describes the most economical and effective plan for the improvements needed, reflecting the views of the Technical Advisors of the two Sections as well as those of the Principal Engineers.

The Commission then adopted the following resolution, subject to the approval of the two Governments:

1. The "Joint Report of the Principal Engineers on Improvement of the International Flood Control Works on the Lower Rio Grande" dated September 10, 1970, is approved.
2. A design flood of 250,000 cubic feet per second (7,080 cubic meters per second) at Rio Grande City is adopted for the improvements that are needed.
3. That as soon as practical the two Governments jointly through the Commission construct the Retamal Diversion Dam, substantially as described in the Report of the Principal Engineers, through the division of work proposed in their Report, and approved by the Commission.
4. That the operation and maintenance of the Retamal Diversion Dam, for the control of floods, be performed jointly by the Commission, dividing the costs equally between the two Sections.
5. That upon approval of the Commission either country be authorized to use the structure unilaterally in order to utilize its waters and that the operation and maintenance costs involved in such use be borne by the using country.
6. That each Government at its own expense proceed to construct, as soon as practical, the work of improvement of its respective floodways and their inlets, and to operate and maintain them in order that the two countries may effect equal diversions of floodwaters through them so that the flood flows reaching Brownsville-Matamoros do not exceed the capacity of the river at that location.
7. That each Government proceed to construct, operate and maintain at its own expense the improvement of the levees in its respective territory.

The meeting then adjourned.

(signed) J. F. Friedkin
Commissioner of the United States

(signed) D. Herrera J.
Commissioner of Mexico

(signed) Louis F. Blanchard
Secretary of the United States
Section

(signed) Fernando Rivas S.
Secretary of the Mexican Section