

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Ronald A. Rogers, AD/DP

FROM : Richard B. Scott/Frydoon Shairzay, DP

SUBJECT: HAVA: To Be or Not To Be?

DATE: April 24, 1978

That is the question as it will effect the future implementation of the Helmand Drainage Project. As John Standish has pointed out, as a legal body HAVA no longer exists; its charter having now long expired. The three ministries of Planning, Water and Power, and Agriculture jointly control the ad hoc operations of HAVA and have been given the task of finding the solution to the future of the agency which once was HAVA. The estimate of when the decision will be made on the future of HAVA have ranged from 3-5 months; long enough in the future to take any immediate pressure off those in the GOA who should decide.

The alternatives appear to be to: 1) re-establish HAVA as a regional authority, (2) to dissolve it and allow the various functions to return to the original ministries, or (3) some mix of these two alternatives as has been occurring over the recent past, with Cooperatives going to the Ministry of Agriculture in the Helmand Governor's office and Land Settlement going to the Ministry of Finance. Land settlement was the raison d'être of HAVA being established in the '50s'.

In the meantime, there is apparently some conflict between the Ministries of Agriculture, and Water and Power (if not also Planning) over who is to get the HAVA domain. Water and Power already has two major projects in the area previously controlled by HAVA, (the Kemal Khan diversion in Nimroz and the Kajakai Gates), and sometimes mans these projects with previous HAVA employees. The Ministry has also recently established a Nimroz Development Authority office in Zaranj with a responsibility that covers much of the Helmand River water-shed. This combines to make Water and Power the obvious inheritor of HAVA or in a position to absorb some of HAVA's other major functions if it is dissolved.

With the Ministry of Water and Power in control of the Kajakai Gates Project, the power plant at Kajakai, the futuare Seraj Project which includes the area from Sanguin to Qala Bust, the potential projects in lower Shamalan and Darwishan which were outlined in the same IECO feasibility report, what is left for HAVA in terms of development projects, aside from our drainage project. Combine this with the establishment of the Nimroz Development Authority to which Mr. Ghulam Farouq (ex-head of HAVA Planning and Statistical Department and the key actor in the Socio-economic Research and Evaluation Unit of the Drainage Project) has been appointed head and who will take other key HAVA personnel with him, it seems that Water and Power is in a position to absorb most if not all the previous functions of HAVA....HAVA that no longer exists as an organization on paper.



Under the new authority, the Kemal Khan diversion structure will be built. This will perhaps bring into operation the major canal (Lashkari Canal) designed by now-Minister Assefi of Mines and Industry, and built by HACU using a combination of hand labor, Russian, and O12 Loan equipment during the early to mid-70's. This in turn will open new lands for land settlement as well as allow the very large landowners in the area to bring more of their water short land under cultivation each year. Continuous water availability for these expanded activities will be aided by the Kajakai Gates Project. And all this activity is going ahead with out foreign assistance, both the Asian Development Bank and Iran having dropped out as donors. Considering the politically sensitive nature of these Lower Helmand developments, in the eyes of Iran, the GOA has probably chosen the most advantageous line of action. And the Ministry of Water and Power is the key actor in the total operation.

In the meantime, HAVA functions without a president, this office having been separated from that of the governor. The vice-president is acting president as well as the head of HAVA Agriculture Division.

As acting president, Mr. Zafari is in no position to take the dynamic lead that seems to be required to move some aspects of a semi-floundering project. Vis-a-vis the three ministries in the joint-control role (at least two of which appear to have a strong interest in final control) the acting president is in a politically unstable position.

As a side note, ministries are not noted for cooperation among themselves. To grossly simplify the situation. each ministry has its own domain which is not to be infringed upon by another. While each minister is a political equal bureaucratically, relations between ministers tend to take on the elements of competition, each guarding his domain while at the same time attempting to establish a more dominant position relative to his peers.

No doubt higher-level staff personnel are hesitant to accept assignment with HAVA given its undefined status, and some other qualified technical staff are being drained off by Water and Power. This Minister (if not Ministry) serves in a supervisory role over HCC which is constructing, among others, the Kajakai Gates and the Kemal Khan diversion, as well as the AID drainage ditches.

The personnel shortage at the higher levels can be seen in the variety of roles played by Mr. Zafari, as noted, and those being occupied by Mr. Rayeq who is head of the Planning Department of the Technical Division but is acting head of that Division as well as head of all the departments of that division with the exception of O & M. While some of the details of this paragraph may not be exact, the conclusion is the same, the gross shortage of middle. and upper-level qualified staff.

The point is that HAVA is at present in a state of limbo which is bound to effect the operations of the Drainage Project in the immediate future, and makes long term planning and USAID consideration of a shift in project scope nearly meaningless. The indefinite nature of the time set for a decision on HAVA could reflect several things including: the Ministry infighting over a regional authority that will continue to be politically and developmentally important; awaiting the outcome of the USAID equipment grant (to dissolve it or to re-establish it), indecision in a situation where the chief parties to the decision are uncertain of the outcome and do not want to lose their chance for a continuing hold. As noted, the delay is on the side of Water and Power given its present line of action and authority.

Perhaps USAID could be a catalyst in the process by clearly stating what is expected in the future and pointing out that the present condition is unacceptable. There is considerable experience in the past with what sorts of arrangements do and do not work. We would recommend the following points, supported with reasons:

1. A regional authority is recommended over the usual provincial arrangement since it is the sort of organization that can coordinate action. At the provincial level, there are representatives of all the ministries that make up the Governor's staff but in the final analysis they are appointed by and report to their minister and do not have strong obligations to the Governor. Coordinated action between ministries, as noted, at the provincial level (or national) is not easily achieved.

2. The Governor should be the president of the authority since it is not an easy matter to coordinate the work of two major power figures in one province. The Governor is responsible for things that occur in his province, like law and order, and his role will overlap and conflict with that of the HAVA president. The local populations see the Governor as the authority in a province. Appeals and petitions will generally go to his office although the actions expected may have to come from the authority. The division of these two roles, which has been experimented with over time, has never worked successfully.

An alternative to having the governor as president of HAVA would be to have a governing board of key people in the valley including the president of HAVA, with the governor as chairman of the board. The potential for conflict between two such roles in one province, however, remains great, and the generally ineffective nature of committee rule at least in the Afghan context remains a cultural problem.

3. The authority would probably best function under the Ministry of Planning although it appears to be the least interested of the three controlling ministries. The Ministry of Agriculture at the present time does not appear to be organized in such a way as to allow for the necessary efficient operation as backstop for a regional authority. Others can outline the problems of that ministry in a clearer manner than this.

The Ministry of Water and Power would appear to be the most logical candidate to control HAVA given the apparent strong desire, the control at present of several other elements that directly relate to HAVA, noted above, and the technical manpower within the ministry that relates to important elements of HAVA, i.e., water resources. But perhaps that ministry is too dispersed with too many major and parallel interests to give a floundering HAVA the necessary breath of life. There would be the possibility of a constant shifting of personnel into and out of the authority to meet the immediate needs of the ministry for which, apparently, there are not adequately trained staff on a national basis.

The Ministry of Planning would not place the same technical demands on HAVA staff as would Water and Power. This ministry is in a position to make the needs of such an authority known at the national level and support it. Of these ministries that have all controlled HAVA in the past, perhaps Planning acted on a consistent basis more on the behalf of HAVA than the others.

4. There is a constant pressure from a variety of sources to compete for key personnel, and since the incentive pay for HAVA was eliminated in 1973, HAVA has not competed well for good staff. The re-introduction of incentive pay for HAVA employees should probably be a part of the package insisted upon in by USAID.

5. To the greatest extent possible, the scope of HAVA activities should be limited to Helmand Province. With the Governor as president of HAVA, cooperation and coordination of action between provinces could be problematical vis-a-vis the governors of neighboring provinces. Since the major water control structures of both Kandahar and Helmand originally came under HAVA, and such critical controls change hands slowly, the control of these elements are not likely to change. The Arghandab Dam, related diversion structures and their use would certainly effect at least lower Helmand province, below Qala Bist. On the other hand the proposed structures to be constructed in Nimroz will be under the new Nimroz authority, noted above. The Kajakai Gates Project, which will drastically change the water resources of Helmand, is presently not under HAVA.

It would appear that water resources, water control, agriculture, land settlement and farmer organization (cooperatives) should fall within the

domain of HAVA with HCC as the support organization for construction and maintenance. Irrigation system maintenance in the past did not function effeciently under HAVA seemingly because it meant major dual shops and equipment. And the qualified personnel to run two such complexes were not available. HCC, also has some distinct advantages in terms of salaries and procurement procedures.

Conclusions: HAVA is in a state of limbo awaiting a joint decision between three ministries as to its future. There is much internal GOA politics at work to delay the final result. In the meantime the USAID/SCS project in Helmand is hampered by organizational problems to be solved at the time of decision on the future status of HAVA. USAID might act early to help speed the decision on what sort of organization would be most acceptable to USAID. A decision made without USAID input could produce a situation and organization that would not meet USAID needs, present or future. In this memo we have outlined the elements we think are important to be included and a brief statement on the reasons for the conclusions. While the points may not be complete, this memo might be used as a discussion paper for the development of such a list of organizational requirements. But the main conclusion is that USAID should interject its desires for an organization at the earliest time possible and attempt to accelerate the process. Left alone the decision could go by default to the Ministry of water and Power, which appears to be the case now, with perhaps some negative consequences. These would include an overemphasis on the technical engineering aspects to the detriment of activities in agriculture, water management and farmer education, not to list the implications of the personnel drain noted above. Given the events of the past few days, also noted, it may be a bit late in the game for USAID to get a hearing.

Recommendation: That this memo be a basis of an early Project Implementation Committee review and deliberation.

cc:

Mr. Grader, D
Mr. Cylke, DD
Mr. Standish, CDE
Dr. Fort, AGR
Mr. Larson, CO
Mr. Kosheleff, RD
Mr. Cummings, DP