

**Rain**

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Mexico State University College of Agriculture and Home Economics.

"The goal of the initiative is to ensure efficient use of available water resources for meeting a large component of water demand along the Rio Grande Basin of Texas and New Mexico," said Rachel Alexander, an information representative in the Texas Water Resources Institute.

Texas and New Mexico have come together on this project because both states benefit from the Rio Grande river. Alexander said that population growth in El Paso and along the border of Texas and New Mexico has caused greater demand than there is water available, where annual rainfall can be less than 8 inches.

The Rio Grande river is not being recharged as fast as water is being taken from it. In fact, during periods of low rainfall, the river has dried up before reaching the Gulf of Mexico.

Politicians and researchers agree that the growth of Texas' population and the shift from rural to urban areas will cause many changes in how this state distributes water.

Kaiser quoted Ben Franklin saying, "You only know the value of water when the well goes dry."

**Powell**

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on a withdrawal, saying, "Don't you think it was more important to go to Jerusalem first?"

In response, Powell demanded "a clear statement from Israel that they are beginning to withdraw" from Palestinian-held territories and "to do it now."

Hours later, the Israeli defense ministry announced troops were preparing to pull back from two West Bank cities, Qalqilya and Tulkarem, early Tuesday.

"It's a start," White House press secretary Ari Fleischer said.

"I hope this is not a little bit of that, but a pullback," Powell said, referring to Israel's mixed signals. Still, he called it an encouraging sign. "I hope it's the beginning of further withdrawals," he added.

If Israel should pull back, Powell said, "the operation has entered a new phase" that could help him move ahead in peacemaking.

Powell rejected any suggestion that the Bush administration was giving Sharon more time. "He's not been getting a free ride," he said.

The secretary of state's

statements came after he held a 2 1/2-hour meeting with Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia whose land-for-peace proposal Israel has been overshadowed by Israel's thrust into the West Bank and by the heated Arab response. Abdullah is scheduled to see Powell at the end of the month at the president's Texas ranch.

Earlier, after meeting the king of Morocco, Powell said he spoke to Bush and "He is encouraging efforts on the part of the administration to start bringing the operation to some conclusion."

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