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March 12, 1976

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Senator Clifford Hansen  
Member, Committee on Interior &  
Insular Affairs  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, #3229  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hansen:

By the terms of Public Law No. 41 of the 63rd Congress of the United States, the City & County of San Francisco, and its neighboring communities were granted the right to certain lands and rights of way within the Yosemite National Park and the adjoining Stanislaus National Forest for the development of a domestic water supply system. Over fifty years ago, in 1923, we completed construction of the O'Shaughnessy Dam in Yosemite National Park for the purpose of creating the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir which serves as the sole source of domestic water supply for almost two million persons today.

Now, fifty-three years and over \$500 million later, it is being suggested that O'Shaughnessy Dam be removed to allow that area to return to its natural physical state. I find that suggestion to be completely irresponsible and without merit from a conservationist point of view, as well as from a social and economic point of view.

First of all, there is simply no feasible alternative water supply for the people of San Francisco and the surrounding communities which we supply. High quality drinking water is becoming a precious commodity in California and to summarily remove the water supply of two million Californians would be disastrous.

Secondly, San Francisco has invested over \$500 million over the years in a series of dams, hydroelectric powerhouses, tunnels, and pipelines to conserve and convey the waters of the Tuolumne River for a distance of 150 miles to San Francisco. Not only do we derive our drinking water from this system, but tremendous amounts of energy -- another precious commodity these days --

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is produced by this system. As directed by Congress, San Francisco has developed the hydroelectric potential of the falling water in its conveyance from Yosemite Park to San Francisco by the construction of some 300,000 kilowatts of hydroelectric power facilities. These facilities generate some two billion kilowatt hours of electric energy annually -- most of which is used for municipal purposes in San Francisco and for all purposes in the areas of the San Joaquin Valley which produces a significant portion of our nation's food supply.

Finally, sanitary restrictions which have been rightly imposed by Congress over the years on the waters of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and the streams and rivers which contribute to it, require that no public boating be allowed on the reservoir. Thus, the reservoir does not detract from the natural environment of northern Yosemite Park in a substantial way. Indeed, we feel that the seven mile long, high mountain lake created by the reservoir has contributed to the present wilderness character of this portion of Yosemite National Park by acting as a barrier to any further development of that area since its construction in 1923.

As a Mayor who was recently elected with the support of virtually every conservation organization in San Francisco, I can assure you that our desire to maintain the integrity of our natural environment is second to none. The removal of the O'Shaughnessy Dam would not contribute to that goal, but would rather create hardships upon the San Francisco Bay Area which could likely spell the end of our existence as a major metropolitan area since I find it hard to imagine surviving without water and power.

I sincerely hope that the Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs will immediately reject any proposal to remove O'Shaughnessy Dam. The City & County of San Francisco has no alternative but to fight this proposal all the way and we stand prepared to do so.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

  
George A. Moscone  
Mayor

cc: Senator Alan Cranston  
Senator John Tunney  
Congressman John Burton  
Congressman Phillip Burton  
Congressman Leo Ryan

cc: Congressman Ron Dellums  
Congressman Pete McCloskey  
Congressman John J. McFall  
John Crowley, Gen. Mgr.,  
SF Public Utilities Commission