May 13, 1954

My dear Mr. Harrison:

On January 13, 1954 I appeared before your Subcommittee and testified on behalf of the Upper Colorado River Project. A part of that testimony was a recommendation that the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams be included in the project. These two dams have been opposed by persons and organizations interested in conservation. This Department recommended construction of the dams rather than other possible alternatives for various reasons including lesser evaporation losses.

On March 9 I advised you by letter of certain errors that had been made by me in my testimony, and I particularly advised you that if a high dam should be built at Glen Canyon in lieu of dams at Echo Park and Split Mountain, the increased losses for evaporation will amount to 70,000 acre-feet per year.

I have this week been advised by the Bureau of Reclamation that the figures which they supplied me for both my original testimony and my letter of March 9 for evaporation from a high Glen Canyon Dam were in error to the extent of an additional 45,000 acre-feet. Thus it appears that the greater evaporation losses from a high Glen Canyon Dam built in lieu of Echo Park and Split Mountain would be in the order of 25,000 acre-feet per year.

This brings up the possibility of substituting a high Glen Canyon Dam for the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams. I have reviewed this matter at length with the Commissioner of Reclamation and with the Assistant Secretary for Water and Power and for reasons which were given in my testimony and by other witnesses before your Subcommittee, we do not consider such a substitute justifiable.

You may note that my statement submitted to your Subcommittee read as follows:

"Should the Glen Canyon Reservoir water surface be raised to provide additional storage, it would present serious difficulty of protecting the Rainbow Bridge National Monument. This monument is unique and has no counterpart. Furthermore, the additional storage in this lower elevation area of high evaporation would
more than offset the savings of evaporation by elimination of Echo Park. The plan would further concentrate storage in the lower end of the basin and fail to provide the needed river control in the upper sections. The system power output would be reduced by an estimated 285,000 kw. if this plan is adopted."

I am aware that this error in the evaporation calculations for the high Glen CanyonDam reservoir may cast doubt as to the reliability of the calculations for other reservoirs. However, my inquiry indicates that the possibility of this is indeed remote. Nonetheless, instructions have been issued to have a new check made and this is now being done.

I regret that this information was not brought to the attention of the Subcommittee at an earlier date. As an explanation but not as an excuse, these new Bureau of Reclamation figures only came to the attention of the Commissioner of Reclamation and the Secretariat of the Department within the past week.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Ralph A. Tudor

Ralph A. Tudor
Under Secretary

Hons. William H. Harrison
Chairman, Irrigation Subcommittee
Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.