

Letters

Grand Canyon Still Threatened

In 1966 a bill was submitted to Congress that would have authorized construction of two dams in the Grand Canyon of Arizona. The dams were not intended to regulate the Colorado River or supply water; they were intended to furnish power so that water already available could be pumped into central Arizona. The bill did not pass Congress, due, in part, to protests from citizens who were convinced that adequate power could come from alternative sources without sacrificing any part of one of the world's unique areas: the Grand Canyon.

That was last year. Now it is 1967, and there are five bills before Congress seeking authorization to construct one or more dams in Grand Canyon. What was defeated last year will pass this year unless the protests are repeated.

In the House of Representatives, H.R. 9 (M. Udall) and H.R. 3300 (Aspinall) contain one dam, and H.R. 722 (Hosmer) contains two; in the Senate, S. 861 (Kuchel) and S. 1242 (Allott) contain one dam. As before, the dams will be used to generate power. However, many recent reports indicate that water can be economically pumped to central Arizona with power sources other than hydropower, and even possibly with power sources already in existence. Some of these points were made at the hearings on last year's bill and reported in "Hearings before the Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, on H.R. 4671," held 9-18 May. Some have been made since in *Science* (for example, "Water or nuclear power: which costs less?" by L. I. Moss, *Letters*, 25 Nov.) The field of nuclear power is developing rapidly; unfortunately, the same cannot be said for hydropower. Interior Secretary Stewart Udall appears to recognize this trend with his recent statements that the Central Arizona Project can operate without either Grand Canyon dam. Udall's position is embodied in four bills: H.R. 7204 (Saylor) and H.R. 7194 (Edmondson), and S. 1004 (Hayden) and S. 1013 (Jackson).

Thus there are bills for a Central

Arizona Project, with and without dams, in both the House and Senate. The House has already held hearings and the Senate will do likewise in early May. The multiplicity of bills obscures an important point: should one chamber pass a dam-less bill and the other pass a pro-dam bill, a joint conference committee will have to iron out the differences in meetings that are not open to the public. There are indications that Wayne Aspinall, chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and sponsor of H.R. 3300, would have sufficient strength in this committee to insure emergence of a bill with a Grand Canyon dam. A bill from such a conference committee would probably then pass the House and Senate with little difficulty.

Thus the Grand Canyon is still in danger and protests are again needed. Urge deletion of the dams from the various bills. Urge, instead, passage of H.R. 1305 (Saylor), which would extend the boundaries of Grand Canyon National Park to include all of Grand Canyon, and which would make unnecessary this yearly struggle to preserve the Canyon in its natural state.

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Selection of NIH Director

Selection of a successor to James A. Shannon is of the highest importance to the future of medical science in the United States. (See "Medical research: NIH wants divorce from PHS," 7 Apr., p. 45.) One has only to follow Shannon from day to day or from year to year to appreciate the diverse problems presented to him which require his rendering difficult judgments on people, institutions, and programs. In addition to his political and fiscal skills, he has shown remarkable competence in all these areas. During his tenure, the NIH operation has grown enormously and his successor should be a person of remarkable proportions. He must be sensitive to the needs of science and the scientist, of science

education, and to the demands for personnel and facilities in the health sciences. He must firmly believe that the proper forum of medical science is the laboratory and the clinic. He must know where to turn for the best counsel and, of course, be an effective politician. But above all, he must be able to resist any threat of political encroachment on the direction of science.

It appears unlikely that such a paragon will be located by the political process. A "search committee" comprised of persons of the highest quality and widest experience would appear to offer more promise of success. These should include intramural scientists and extramural "clients" of NIH, representatives of medical schools, research institutes, and teaching hospitals. Candidates should be critically reviewed and recommendations forwarded to the Surgeon General or the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, or both.

Let there be no mistake. A wise selection would insure the continued growth of medical science and education, but an unwise selection in filling this critical post could do great damage to all phases of American medicine.

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McNamara in Mississippi

Greenberg missed completely the spirit of McNamara's presentation at Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi (*News and Comment*, 3 Mar., p. 1089). In reference to the "dismal" standing of the state in education, McNamara stated, "But though these problems exist, the State has made genuine progress in a number of educational projects: You have developed a state-wide system of junior colleges. You have established a new organizational plan for higher education. You have begun a Research and Development Center. And most of all, you have demonstrated a desire and a determination to improve the State's system of public and higher education." McNamara's remarks, while critical of the condition of education in Mississippi, were nevertheless constructive and welcome.

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Greenberg referred to Mississippi as "one of the underdeveloped lands," apparently the inference being that this state is not really a part of these United States. If one limits his view to our country, looks at mass statistics nationally, and uses journalistic license freely, this might be a rough approximation of fact. Mississippi is rich relative to most of the world, and if one really studies the state in some depth, he will find that both the poverty and ignorance here are concentrated in certain areas and groups. The situation in Mississippi is quite analogous to that in Washington, D.C. These conditions are not . . . descriptive of Jackson or of Millsaps College. This city, in fact, has one of the highest educational levels in the United States, measured by average years of schooling completed by its populace. Its per capita income approaches the national average. Furthermore, Millsaps can hold its head high among the better schools of this nation.

McNamara was invited here to participate in a 2-day academic convocation. The other principal speakers were the chairman of the board of United States Steel, Roger Blough, and the governor of Tennessee, Buford Ellington. This convocation was conducted in the highest academic tradition and was in no sense a cheap commercial venture. It is true that it occurred just prior to a major fund-raising effort to be undertaken by Millsaps in response to a Ford Foundation Challenge Grant. These grants are recognition of the institution's potential as a center of educational excellence. But no one attending these events was asked for money. Only passing reference was made to the Ford grant in the course of the program at which Mr. McNamara spoke. Certainly, we would not be a part of a scheme to invite him here to make a personal gift or to award some largesse from the Defense Department. He was invited because of his position of high distinction in this nation. The convocation provided the area with an educational uplift which few of its people have ever experienced. . . .

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McNamara appears to have been misinformed when he compared university enrollments in Europe with those of the United States. Specifically, he stated: "Here we have more than

four million students in college and this represents some 40 percent of our college-age population."

For the comparison to be valid, one must restrict the data to universities. Indeed, the Secretary spoke of students "at the university level" when presenting his enrollment figures of 10, 7, and 7 percent of college-age populations in the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy, respectively. The facts as reported by the Bureau of Census and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare ("Digest of Educational Statistics," publication OE-10024-63) appear to be that in 1962 we had in the United States 2043 "institutions of higher education" with an enrollment of about 4,207,000. Included in these totals were 142 universities with an enrollment of about 1,725,000. Of our total population, about 20 million may be considered as a fair estimate of our college-age population (18 to 25 in the United States; 20 to 27 in Europe). From this it follows that 8 to 9 percent of our college-age population was in universities—a figure of the same order of magnitude as the percentages reported by the Secretary for four European countries.

If the Secretary wishes to boast about our facilities for higher education and the opportunities afforded to our young people for advanced study, he should not equate HEW's "institutions of higher education" and universities. In fact, the 2043 institutions of higher education on the HEW list (publication DE-54003-60) include innumerable junior colleges, religious seminaries, Bible colleges, and institutes of physiatrics, chiropody, and others. Admittedly, these institutions of higher education are higher than something, but they are appreciably lower on the educational totem pole than any European university.

A more meaningful comparison might have emerged from data on 11 West European universities collected in Switzerland by the Labhardt Commission (*Eidgenössische Expertenkommission für Fragen der Hochschuleförderung*, Bern, 29 June 1964). For the population segment 20 to 29 years of age, the Swiss study revealed that only 1.44 to 4.09 percent of the college-age populations in the West European countries were attending universities, as compared with 7 percent in the United States.

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