The Honorable
Kenneth McKellar
President Pro-tempore of the Senate
Washington, D.C.

My dear Senator McKellar:

Your letter of November 3 regarding H. J. Res. 266 has just reached me. I will, of course, be glad to come before your Committee at any time I am invited to do so.

May I again urge as strongly as I can that the Congress reach a prompt decision regarding the funds that may be made available now and hereafter for the work of UNRRA. As I have already testified, UNRRA is now without available funds. Its work has already been curtailed. It will cease entirely within a short period unless we are given the additional necessary funds. The need is so urgent, the case of millions of human beings so desperate, that we can no longer wait in taking action without causing untold suffering.

May I again express the deep hope that the bill when passed will not contain crippling restrictions. Since writing to you on November 2 in regard to the Brown amendment attached to the House bill appropriating funds for UNRRA, I have given further thought to the matter and I feel that I should add this post-script to my earlier communication. I believe more strongly than ever that the enactment of this amendment would be most unfortunate.

The opportunity for public service offered me as Director General of UNRRA appealed to me strongly. I have felt that through this organization, created to minister to the urgent needs of survivors of a tragic war, the humanitarian impulses of the American people would find a fitting expression. As my whole life has been devoted to public service and to humanitarian causes, I need hardly tell you that, with a full appreciation of the manifold difficulties, I was not only willing but eager to play a part in this challenging endeavor.

As I pointed out to you in my recent letter, UNRRA is a relief organization dedicated solely to the purpose of
bringing urgently needed supplies and services to starving peoples. On this account, I feel keenly that it would be unworthy of the United States to place political conditions on its participation. I have the greatest sympathy with the American desire to see the press accorded fullest freedom everywhere. I do not feel that it is proper, or that it would be effective, to attempt to impose this condition as the price of continuing relief. On the contrary, I believe the only result of such an attempt would be to impair the ability of UNRRA to perform the humane task to which it is dedicated.

Should we raise political conditions now not contemplated at the time we made our current commitment, we would inevitably place our own good faith in question. At the very least we would invite other countries to follow our lead, attaching conditions to their grants. The task of UNRRA has not been an easy one. Under these circumstances it would become well-nigh impossible. The United States would be held responsible for whatever suffering might be entailed.

I am again laying my views before you because of my profound conviction that I do not exaggerate the gravity of the situation.

Very sincerely yours,

Herbert H. Lehman
Director General