Honoradle Kenneth McKellar, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator McKellar:

The 1950 Niagara Water Treaty with Canada makes additional water available to both countries for power generation at Niagara Falls, subject to the primary obligation of preserving and enhancing the scenic beauty of Niagara Falls and River. The new Treaty permits the development of a large block of low-cost power in an area where power is urgently needed. Canada is already going ahead with construction of major works to utilize Canada's share of the increased water for power purposes. It is urgent that the United States take steps correspondingly to develop facilities to utilize the additional water made available to the United States under the Treaty.

In furtherance of the Treaty provisions, extensive investigations, including model studies, are now being conducted under the direction of the International Joint Commission to determine the most feasible general plans for the location and design of remedial works necessary to preserve the scenic beauty of the Falls under the new hydraulic conditions. In conjunction therewith and pursuant to a Senate Public Works Committee resolution, the Corps of Engineers is engaged in engineering-economic studies to develop the most feasible general plans for power redevelopment on the United States side, consistent with the provisions of the Treaty. A report of the Division and District Engineers has been filed containing basic plans for a comprehensive power redevelopment and general plans for initial-stage development. That report is now under study by the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, as announced by public notice issued by the Army Engineers. The initial-stage development includes a high-head generating plant and a pumping-generating plant, both below the Falls, and a compensating works dam above the Falls.
Under the conditions of the Treaty and also due to natural fluctuations in river flow, the water available for power varies decidedly over relatively short periods of time. To obtain efficient power generation under the varying hydraulic conditions, it is necessary that the compensating works structure, included in the first-phase construction, be designed and operated to permit large changes in flow quickly, as well as to assist in the preservation of the scenic spectacle. The location and design of this structure are subject to the findings of model studies now under way.

America must be kept strong. We must continue to develop wisely our great resources, including water power, to meet our expanding everyday needs—for industry, for community service, and on the farm. Niagara Falls is one of the greatest power sites in the world, in addition to being a tremendous scenic attraction. The importance of the power redevelopment works on the United States side necessitates a high degree of pre-construction planning, and it should be carried forward now. That engineering planning is necessary to assure that the best use of the power site, both as regards the initial and later-stage development, has been obtained; that the plans for operation of the power development are compatible with navigation requirements; that the plans are fully coordinated and integrated with those for remedial works to maintain the scenic spectacle at the Falls and in the cascades upstream; and that the interests of the United States in the construction of international works to serve both scenery and power, as well as in hydraulic operation of the river's flow generally, will be adequately protected. This basic planning is a necessary preliminary to any construction operation.

I strongly urge, accordingly, that your Committee take action to amend the Department of the Army Civil Functions Appropriation Bill 1953, as passed by the House of Representatives, to include funds in the amount of $1,000,000, as recommended by the Bureau of the Budget, to carry on the engineering studies and design of Niagara Falls to a more definitive stage of completion.
May 14, 1952

Hon. Kenneth McKellar

Should you desire a further statement from me as to the need for this appropriation, I would be pleased to appear personally before your Committee.

Sincerely yours,