

The Board of Levee Commissioners

OF THE

Orleans Levee District

SUITE 202 - ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
NEW ORLEANS LAKEFRONT AIRPORT

New Orleans, La.

70126

January 4, 1978

PROTECTING YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY

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CHIEF ENGINEER & SECRETARY

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EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR

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The Honorable George Fischer, Secretary
Department of Transportation & Development
State of Louisiana
P. O. Box 44245
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Dear Mr. Fischer:

Federal Judge Charles Schwartz has issued an injunction against further work on the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project until the U. S. Corps of Engineers prepares a supplemental environmental impact statement. This supplemental EIS will probably require a minimum of two years to complete and I feel confident that upon its completion we face another series of lengthy courtsuits before any further work can be done on the major portions of this protection plan for Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Tammany Parishes and the other parishes that surround the lake.

This project was originally estimated, in 1965, to cost approximately 85 million dollars. Because of construction delays and inflation the project's cost is now estimated to be in excess of 400 million dollars.

St. Tammany Parish has refused to pay its share of the project and Governor McKiethen, by Executive Order, assigned this share of the cost of the protection plan to the Department of Public Works. The Pontchartrain Levee District has exhausted its funds that were available for the project and Governor Edwards has signed assurances with the USCE that the state will pay for portions of the project. The Lake Borgne Levee District is in arrears on its share of the project and it is questionable whether it will be able to make its payments.

The Orleans Levee Board's share of the project approximates 67% of local participation. As of this date, if there are no further delays in the project, we estimate that we will have just enough money to pay our share, which at this time is estimated to be \$88,380,000. Any delay which will inflate the cost of the project in excess of the 400 million dollars now estimated will place the cost beyond our ability to pay.

The Hon. George Fischer

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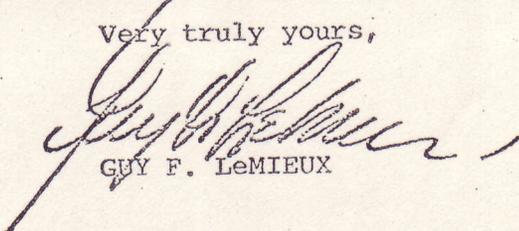
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What this probably means is that the project as it has been developed by the USCE by Congressional mandate is no longer viable.

I respectfully request that a meeting be set in your office in Baton Rouge, with the parties involved, to discuss the future of this project and the direction we should follow. The Governor certainly should be made aware of the status as it now exists.

Attached is a list of people whom I believe should be invited to this meeting. A copy of this letter has been sent to each of the people on this list.

Very truly yours,



GUY F. LEMIEUX

GFL/mja

cc: See Attached list