LOUISIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EDWARD C. SCOGIN
District 76

Phone Office (504) 641-0262
Phone Home (504) 643-6853
Office: 2063 2nd St.
Slidell, LA 70458
Home: Rt. 1, Box 603
Slidell, LA 70458

COMMITTEES
Health & Welfare
Natural Resources
Ways & Means

February 27, 1977

Colonel Early Rush, District Engineer
New Orleans District Army Corps of Engineers
Foot of Prytania Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Colonel Rush:

I noted with interest your media plea to Orleans Parish residents to "speak up" and support the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project, or else lose it. Colonel, they have spoken, in the only way they really can, at the polls. They spoke three times, and while the local funding for the project was defeated three times, two of the three times, it was defeated by the residents of Orleans Parish, resoundingly! Further, you made it appear that those who are opposed (the majority) are against the entire project. It should be made perfectly clear that when such statements are made by a governmental agency as allegedly prestegious as the corps, that the opposition is only to the Barrier Phases of the project, and not the project in its' entirety. Further, it should not be stated that only certain special interests in St. Tammany Parish, and environmentalists are opposed, when in fact, 90% of all the peoples of the Parishes North of Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Maurepas, some 300,000 people, are opposed to the Barriers.

Further, it should be stated that the Municipal Associations, as well as Parish Governments are opposed, and have or will, in fact, file suit. An attempt to minimize the opposition should not be a part of corps tactics.

President Carter is to be commended for his decision to have a number of questionable corps projects suspended until further review of their feasibility.

The Corps continues to be used as a political pawn to please the appetite of unscrupulous businessmen, and some politicians, for economic motivations with complete disregard to those who might suffer the consequences of misguided actions.

Very truly,

Edw. C. Scogin

EDWARD C. SCOGIN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ECS:t
CC. Honorable James E. Carter, President

COL Rush/cb/200

LMNDE

8 March 1977

Honorable Edward C. Scogin
Louisiana House of Representatives
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Mr. Scogin:

Thank you very much for your recent letter relating to media reports on my presentation at the annual meeting of the Association of Louisiana Levee Boards regarding the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Hurricane Protection project and also for the 18-24 March 1976 issue of the Courier which I received subsequently.

I have noted the comments you made in your letter. In order that you may be aware of the actual remarks made at the Association of Louisiana Levee Boards meeting, I am inclosing herewith a copy of the text of my remarks pertaining to the hurricane protection project.

Sincerely yours,

Exec Ofc

1 Incl
As stated

EARLY J. RUSH III
Colonel, CE
District Engineer

CF: w incl
C/Engineering Div

THE SECOND QUESTION, AND THIS ONE DEEPLY TROUBLES ME, RELATES TO HURRICANE PROTECTION AND THE COMPLACENCY OF THE PEOPLE THREATENED BY HURRICANE FLOODING.

~~NOW,~~ HERE IN THE LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN AREA, WE HAVE A LARGE PROJECT THAT CAME ON THE HEELS OF HURRICANE BETSY--THE STORM THAT KILLED PEOPLE AND CAUSED ALMOST $100 MILLION IN FLOOD DAMAGES IN LOUISIANA. THE AFFECTED LEVEE BOARDS, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS HAVE ALL BEEN WORKING WITH THE CORPS ON THIS PROJECT SINCE CONGRESS AUTHORIZED AND FUNDED THE WORK IN 1965.

NO, CHECK THAT! WE'VE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER ON THIS PROTECTION SINCE 1955 WHEN CONGRESS TOLD US TO LOOK AT THE PROBLEM AND COME UP WITH A FEASIBLE SOLUTION.

AND, STUDY IT WE DID, AND I DON'T MEAN CASUALLY. WE APPROACHED THIS PROBLEM WITH THE ECOLOGY OF LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN UPPERMOST IN MIND. WE RE-CREATED LAKES PONTCHARTRAIN, MAUREPAS, BORGNE, AND A PORTION OF MISSISSIPPI SOUND IN MODEL FORM AT THE WATERWAYS EXPERIMENTAL STATION AND PERFORMED EXTENSIVE STUDIES OF VIRTUALLY EVERY POSSIBLE SITUATION.

OUR GOAL WAS TO INSURE THAT ANY STRUCTURAL MEASURES NEEDED TO PRECLUDE HURRICANE SURGES FROM ENTERING LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, WOULD BE SO DESIGNED AS TO MAINTAIN TIDAL EXCHANGE AND SALINITY LEVELS AT OR NEAR PRE-PROJECT CONDITIONS.

BUT, NOW, AFTER MORE THAN 10 YEARS OF CONSTRUCTION--ALL OF WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, PROVIDES INCREASINGLY HIGHER LEVELS OF PROTECTION--WE FIND THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE STRANGELY SILENT.

PERHAPS, THEY FEEL THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL LOOK OUT FOR THEM--THAT THE CORPS AND THE LEVEE DISTRICTS WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE THE NEEDED PROTECTION WITHOUT THEIR HAVING TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES.

INDEED, THIS HAS BEEN TRUE UP TILL NOW. BUT, FOR HOW MUCH LONGER CAN WE GO FORWARD WITHOUT A RENEWED EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT BY THE PEOPLE MOST AFFECTED? I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION, AND I'M SURE YOU DON'T KNOW EITHER.

BUT, I DO KNOW THAT AN EXPRESSION FROM THE "SILENT MAJORITY" WOULD BE MOST WELCOME.

I MAY BE SURPRISED TO FIND THAT THE MAJORITY DOESN'T WANT THE GOOD LEVEL OF HURRICANE PROTECTION THAT CAN BE PROVIDED BY THIS PROJECT--BUT, I REALLY DON'T THINK SO.