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February 6, 1917.

Hon. Carl Hayden, M. C.
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Hayden:-

The "Northern Arizona Leader" published at Flagstaff, Ariz., publishes a copy of your bill introduced by you on January 24 for the purpose of creating a National Park at the Grand Canyon. Allow me to congratulate you on the idea of securing a National Park at that grand scenic wonder, as I am sure that the idea will not only receive the united support of the people of Arizona, but that the Nation and the world will be in full accord with you in this purpose.

But, Mr. Hayden, a careful reading of the proposed act as introduced by you contains a provision in section 4 that appears to me to "take in too much territory" if you will pardon that expression. I beg to call your attention to the fact that the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad company has been allowed to obtain title to half of the land now embraced in the greater part of the Grand Canyon, and if your proposed law passes in its present form it will mean that that railroad company will have title to half of that great world's wonder, and will be allowed to use their land in any manner they desire, either to sell in townsite lots, to lease, or to otherwise use or dispose of in such manner as they see fit, whether for the benefit or beautification of that park or not.

Do you not think, Mr. Hayden, that while the matter is under consideration by Congress that the Government should take some steps looking to the question of the Government regaining the complete domain of the Grand Canyon, either by allowing the railroad company to take other lands on the public domain elsewhere, for the Government to purchase the land back from the company, or for the United States under its right of eminent domain to take (at a fair valuation, of course) this land that the railroad company has been allowed to secure, and thus allow the Government in fact as well as in name to establish a National Park at the Grand Canyon, rather than for the Government to foot the bill, and let the Santa Fe system stand idly by and profit at the expense of the Government and the people.

I hope, Mr. Hayden, that you will appreciate the purpose of this letter, and that you will receive it in the same manner it is written and with the same spirit of friendliness. I hope that you will fully consider the point made by me in this regard, and that you will see your way clear to take prompt action in having your bill changed or amended to permit the Government to have complete and full ownership and control of this great work of God.

Very cordially yours,

Thomas J. Croaff

TJC/c.