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REMARKS OF MARVIN B. DURNING, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON,
AT THE
NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
PORTLAND, OREGON, JUNE 26, 1968

Mrs. Johnson, Secretary Freeman, Dr. Wolman:

Fellow revolutionaries!

We live in a revolutionary America, growing and changing
at a fantastic pace

- adding 50 million people since the outbreak of the Korean War,
- moving 12 million people off the land into and around the cities in the last fifteen years,
- with a gross national product of \$800 billion, adding each year as much as all but seven of the nations of the world put together produce,
- building things on the land at such a rate that we shall rebuild America in the next forty years,
- turning the American Columbia River in one generation from a roaring torrent to a series of slack pools behind power dams unparalleled anywhere on earth -- Grand Coulee . . . Chief Joseph . . . Wells . . . Rocky Reach . . . Rock Island . . . Wanapum . . . Priest Rapids . . . McNary . . . John Day . . . The Dalles . . . Bonneville -- and raising the temperature of the river itself as it cools the world's largest concentration of nuclear reactors at Hanford, Washington.

Fellow revolutionaries!

We Americans are changing. Individually, each of us is growing older, but as a nation, we are growing younger, and at a rapid rate. By the early 1970's we shall be the youngest nation in the free world, and the richest and most productive nation in the world, the most technologically advanced nation in the world, and one of the best educated nations in the world. Faced with this kind of revolutionary change

- faced with a revolution in population, urbanization, production, incomes, technology and people,
- faced with a revolutionary America,

if you are a deep thinker, a dreamer, a maker of bold plans, a visionary, you are a practical man.

President Johnson is a practical man with a vision about the land, the waters, the air of America. Mrs. Johnson is a practical American woman with a vision of what a truly beautiful America can be. We here in the Northwest are practical too. We know that the Columbia River, running from the Selkirk Mountains of British Columbia through Washington and Oregon to the Pacific, is a great river still unfulfilled. Its energy has been harnessed, its waters have changed deserts into farms, but its magic, its history, its beauty, its wildlife, its wisdom lie mostly undiscovered.

The time to conserve and to develop these resources of the Columbia River has come. The time for the Northwest's next bold step is now. Work pursuant to the Canadian-American Treaty will cause all the powerhouses of existing dams to be remodeled in the years immediately ahead. The President, the Congress, the states of Washington and Oregon, the Province of British Columbia, and the various Federal agencies are engaged in new programs of recreational development, cultural and educational innovation. They are turning new attention to conservation of our natural beauty. The growing travel industry already ranks high in economic importance to the Northwest; it is the third largest industry in Washington.

Authority already exists to begin work. The Federal Power Commission has directed federally licensed dams to prepare recreation plans for their reservoirs. Our national government, through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, the Federal Water Project Recreation Act, and Pacific Northwest River Basins Commission, and other new programs has made it possible for the people of the Northwest to accomplish tasks beyond their reach a few years ago.

But other, destructive trends are also at work -- the pollution of the Columbia's water, the desecration of its beauty by honky-tonk building in the shorelands, and rumors even of industrial developments in Columbia Gorge.

I am a practical man -- a visionary, that is. I know that people will come to and use the Columbia in increasing numbers. I propose, therefore, that we conserve it, by guiding and developing that use. I propose a new, practical vision for our great Columbia River -- a Canadian-American Columbia River Plan

- a unified, systematic development of the historic, natural beauty, educational, recreational and cultural resources of this mighty Columbia River,
- that during the remodeling of the powerhouses, provision be made for transportation of small boats up or down the elevations of the dams, to make possible

continuous small boat navigation of the Columbia from the mountains of British Columbia to the Pacific Ocean -- from the Selkirks to the sea!

- that at each power dam along the river -- structures which in size, influence, and permanence are among the major monuments of American civilization to date -- there should be museums, amphitheaters, fishways, and educational and scientific uses of the buildings and grounds -- all in a coordinated theme to explain the history and geology of the region;
- that there be new efforts for the conservation of the purity, wild life, and natural beauty of this river, its great canyon and shorelands -- including state legislation in Washington and Oregon establishing a Columbia River Conservation Area including shorelands, uplands, and approaches to the river all the way from the Canadian border to the Pacific Ocean -- permitting, but regulating, land uses in that area to conserve quality and natural beauty;
- that festivals of art, music, drama and dance take an important and colorful part in the plans for enjoyment of the river setting;
- that a scenic and recreational parkway be built down the length of the river;
- and that excellence in design be insisted on throughout all man-made structures, with design teams employed from the very start.

I don't make this proposal alone, without consultation with others, for over the past two years much work has been done. These ideas have been discussed with some managers and board members of the Public Utilities Districts operating hydro dams on the Columbia. Contact has been made with the British Columbia Minister of Hydro Power. With the assistance of the Senators and a Congressman from Washington, a group of us met privately with the Chairman and one member of the Federal Power Commission some time ago; and representatives of the Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Interior, and the Pacific Northwest River Basins Commission have heard this idea.

All were interested . . . all agreed that this could be done, that the vision is a practical one.

About eighteen months ago, Mrs. Johnson, acting for President Johnson, honored me by a conservation award presented in the city where they live. Now, Mrs. Johnson and hundreds of the leading architects of America are visiting in the Northwest, in the area where I live --

Mrs. Johnson, Secretary Freeman, Dr. Wolman, architects of

America,

Fellow Revolutionaries!

I ask your help, that from this meeting the news go out across this land that the magnificent Columbia River and its shorelands shall henceforth be held and used in trust -- that for centuries to come the grass will grow, the fish will swim, the river run, the people thrill, as we do today.

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