

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

21 September 1972

Honorable B. F. Sisk
House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Sisk:

I notice from recent newspaper accounts that you are still espousing a Minaret Summit trans-Sierra highway. Most of the reasons you give are the old familiar ones I have been hearing for years, and I see no point in taking up either your time or mine in discussing items on which you seem to have a closed mind. Instead, I will limit this letter to one specific question in the hope that you will be able to address yourself to it in some detail. My question is --

What is the basis for your claim that you have had "full consultation with the voters (you) serve", and that they "wish and desire...a Minaret Summit crossing?"

Except for three years during the mid-sixties, I have been a constituent of your district all my life, and I do not recall your ever "fully consulting" me as to my feelings regarding this issue. Have you ever conducted a questionnaire to determine what your constituency wants? If not, what is your definition of "full consultation?"

In this vein, I would like to acquaint you with the results of a questionnaire conducted by Ernest N. Mobley of the 33rd California Assembly district in 1968. In part, it consisted of the following --

"Do you favor a highway across the Minaret Summit?	YES	NO	UNDEC.
	43%	36%	21%
"Do you favor closing Yosemite to automobiles?	17%	73%	10%

The response to the question regarding Yosemite seems to indicate that the respondents were overwhelmingly automobile-oriented. Yet, in spite of their predilection toward automobiles, their "support" for a Minaret Summit highway was lukewarm at best.

This lack of enthusiasm is especially interesting if you consider that Mr. Mobley's district includes (as yours does not) Madera County--supposedly the primary beneficiary of such a highway!

From my own personal experience, I know of very few of your constituents who favor the highway, but I know many of them who are opposed to it. (These latter, incidentally, say that they do not write to you because your "head is made up"--that you don't want to be bothered with the facts.)

As you may have noticed, Carol Harner feels that you are out of touch with your constituency on this matter, and she has chosen to make an issue of the Minaret Summit highway. Do you really think that she would raise this issue if she thought that her views on it would be unpopular?

Is it perhaps possible that you are out of touch with your

constituency on this issue?

I reiterate my original question--

What is the basis for your claim that you have had
"full consultation with the voters (you) serve", and that
they "wish and desire...a Minaret Summit crossing?"

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

21 September 1972

Honorable Raymond J. Sherwin
727 Ohio Street
Vallejo
California 94590

Dear Ray,

Greetings upon your return from Moscow. I hope polar bears were one of the things that got saved.

I hear via the grapevine that you are preparing a mailing directed toward Club members who are constituents of B. F. Sisk. In this regard I see two problems, and I would like to offer a solution to both of them:

1. There is ample evidence that our members do not even open their mail, let alone read it. I would like to volunteer the use of my right arm and ink pad to imprint the envelopes with the Tehipite Chapter name and address. This would give the envelopes a somewhat more personal touch, and definitely a more local appearance. This might help to overcome the handicap of the computer-printed mailing labels. It would also make it more clear to people that the mailing is being directed to a fairly select group, and this would hopefully minimize the tendency of each recipient to assume that "everybody else" will be writing, and therefore his letter would not be missed.

2. More importantly, we keep hearing that public officials are inclined to discount a flood of letters that come in all within a short time span--it is obviously the result of a high-pressure campaign, and they use that as an excuse to discount the letters if they don't like what the letters say. When an appeal for letters is issued, and providing the time element is not critical, I feel very strongly that the effort is largely negated by sending out all the appeals at once. I find the main objection to spreading out such appeals is that usually the person doing the mailing doesn't want to be bothered walking down to the post office more than once, but prefers to dump all the appeals in the mail at one time in order to wash his hands of the matter.

I am offering to walk down to the post office many different times with your envelopes in order to spread out the mailing. (This would also give them a local cancellation, which also might help to get them opened and read.) I would suggest spreading it out between now and the end of November (it should be finished before the holiday season.) But if you feel it should be spread over a shorter period I could do it that way. The main thing is to spread it out.

Notice in my enclos/ that I made not attempt to sway Sisk. His head is truly made up. But that doesn't mean we can't put him on the defensive! Carol Harner, feffered to in my enclosere, is the Repblican candidate; she has come out against the highway. How about a contribution to her campaign from the Foundation? Perhaps it could be channeled through the Fund for the Watergate Seven. Sincerely, George Whitmore

letter of
21 Sep 72
to Sisk

B. J. Chasteen from G. W. Whitmore 26 Sep 72

Re. your letter of 8 Sep 72 addressed to "Dear Friends" asking their support for the San Joaquin Wilderness.

This seems good, but I do detect one factual error. In two places you refer to the USFS being "opposed" to FH 100. See the USFS position statement of last December, also Frances' account of Sotero's statement before the Madera County supervisors on December 20; this latter provides insight into USFS interpretation of their formal position statement.

In the latter, Sotero repeatedly told the Madera Supervisors that the USFS was still not opposed to the road, but only that the USFS had determined that it would be detrimental to the forest resource (as opposed to and distinct from broader regional or national concerns). It was clear that the USFS would not oppose the road if somebody else (for example Madera County) wanted to build it for their own purposes.

I realize that everybody (including the Madera supervisors) assumed the new position statement was one of opposition, but a careful reading of it and Sotero's own verbal interpretation definitely indicate otherwise. USFS action since then seems to bear this out-- it appears that Sotero wants the road, perhaps Leisz does, and McGuire????