

24 March 1972

Senator Fred A. Gross, Jr.
2916 Chama, N.E.
Albuquerque, N. M. 87110

Dear Senator Gross:

It surprises me that you were so offended by my open letter to the New Mexico House of Representatives, which criticized a majority of the members of the House for refusing to vote meaningful legislation to regulate land development and the allocation of water resources. My letter obviously was not an attack on those members of the House who supported such legislation.

I did not distribute the letter myself to the members of the Senate, although I did not oppose the distribution, and from what I have heard about the way this legislation was handled by the Senate, especially by the Chairman of the Finance Committee which was a travesty of democratic procedure, it was appropriate for the majority of the Senate too.

If, as you say, condemnation of a majority of legislators for what in the public mind was clearly cynical disregard for the best interests of the people of the State, caused the more conscientious and public minded minority representatives to join the majority, then their dedication to the highest responsibilities of elected representatives of the people is in serious doubt and they deserve no less condemnation than their more venal colleagues.

The major victories for conservation and environmental protection, as you know, have not been won by mincing words or compromising principles. To support a minority position without political power takes courage, and you can be sure your stand on these conservation issues is appreciated by all of similar persuasion.

Very sincerely yours,

