UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★ news release

For Release to PM's, JUNE 25, 1963

ADDRESS BY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR STEWART L. UDALL BEFORE THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE TO KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL, JUNE 25, 1963, WASHINGTON, D. C.

It is with great personal pleasure that I join you today in this--the 10th Anniversary Conference of the Keep America Beautiful movement. It is a particular privilege to address you and to lend my praise for the remarkable progress you have made during the past decade in stimulating a national awareness about the litter problem.

Your work has been for a more wholesome and pleasant environment. Since this environment must be shared by all--your successes and achievements are a very real and personal benefit to me and to each member of my family. For this, I say thank you.

Your program of public education to instill in every one of us a feeling of pride and responsibility for the appearance of our country plays a vital and integral part in maintaining and raising our cultural and ethical standards as a whole people.

Who is responsible for Keep America Beautiful's success? First, great credit belongs to the directors, officers and staff of Keep America Beautiful, Inc. Secondly, this success is due to the active support of the more than 70 major organizations which are represented on Keep America Beautiful's National Advisory Council. The collective membership of these groups runs to the millions. To the National Advertising Council--the thousands of transportation firms--newspaper and magazine publishers and the radio and television stations who keep the slogan "Every Litter Bit Hurts" in front of us, goes a hearty well done. I also want to commend the business and industrial community, particularly the packaging industry, for their very substantial and continuing financial support which has made this good work by Keep America Beautiful possible. Indeed, Keep America Beautiful's success rests with every person who disposes of litter and trash in a proper place and in a proper way. Keep America Beautiful, it seems to me, is each and every one of us.

Finally, I am sure it includes a 10-year old boy, named David Godfrey, who wrote the following letter to my Department. I want to share part of it with you.

> "Our reading class has been studying about keeping forests clean. We are in the fifth grade. I have an idea how it <u>works that you could prevent this</u>.

Put up a live camera and run wires all over the park. Then put an ad in the newspaper and charge something like $2,000 to every person that is found doing things like throwing trash around.

Then show some pictures of people doing them on TV and just interrupt good programs to do it.

After a while, put another ad in the paper saying they will hide the cameras all over the park so they can catch more. Then say they hide them up in trees, bushes and etc. There won't be any more for a while!"

and of course, there was the inevitable

"(P.S. Please answer my letter quickly!)"

While my Department hasn't fully implemented all his suggestions the letter makes clear the forthrightness of youth. David lives in the child's world of black and white--not an adult world of gray. Obviously David sees littering as black and he wants to get it stopped. The important thing about David's letter, as far as you and I are concerned, is this, he and the other millions of 10-year olds hold the clue to a clean and beautiful America in the not too distant future.

Your program is rightfully an educational one, and the Davids are your most responsive prospects. There is more chance that David will admonish Dad for throwing a gum wrapper out of the car window than vice versa. Let one of your prime objectives for the decade ahead be to put a "David" in every household across the land.

Our program thus far, substantial though it has been, is not good enough. We are in the midst of an ever swiftening technological revolution. One of the welcome outgrowths of this has been a tremendous advance in the field of merchandise packaging. Disposable--nonreturnable--throwaway--these are the household symbols of this revolution.

Disposable paper sleeping bags are now standard equipment for our forest fire fighters. Truly, it is an amazing transformation which is taking place.

Our problem is simply one of learning to live in harmony with our technological progress. We have no long established criteria to guide us in this unique situation. Our dilemma is the result of super abundance rather than the eternal scarcity which has been man's constant companion throughout human history. I suppose the bottles, cans and tin foil we discard without thought would have made excellent trading stock for the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Newspapers--once used to wrap vegetables and meats in the market place have been replaced by the paper bag. Incidently, these make most effective litter bags for the family car. We offer such bags to visitors as they enter the National Parks. For over 10 year now, this technique has helped materially in keeping the Parks litter-free.

No one consciously enjoys befouled surroundings. Too many of us, however, do not equate the casually dropped tissue or cigarette package with our other standards of personal cleanliness. Today, none of us would be satisfied with a pit privy, a Saturday night tin tub bath, or a well in the backyard. It is equally important that we develop a positive national attitude toward keeping our overall environment clean and free of litter. Extending this common courtesy to those with whom we share a street, a community, a countryside or a public beach is no more than a sign of personal pride.

We in the Nation's Capital have a special obligation, for our City should reflect the achievements and standards of a society of free men. One of my responsibilities is the administration of the parks and monuments here in the District of Columbia. We spend nearly three-fourths of a million dollars annually in the removal of trash and litter from these parks. I don't begrudge one cent of this when the refuse has been properly disposed of. I don't like it at all, however, when public money must be spent to pick it up one piece at a time. I don't like the way our Watergate amphitheatre looks after a band concert.

It is no credit to those who had the privilege of attending. I like even less the litter statistics about our Fourth of July celebration on the grounds of the Washington Monument. Before the Government opens for business on the day following, our park maintenance people must gather up more than 80 cubic yards of litter from the Monument grounds. The celebration might be more aptly described as a litter fallout.

In spite of these specialized situations, I am proud of the day to day appearance of the parks and monuments here in the Capital, and we know the vast majority of people make a conscious effort to help keep them clean.

Today, I want to discuss an old and honorable and ever-changing cause--the cause of conservation of resources and of men.

For the first time in history a note of optimism pervades the resource reports of our experts. Conservation, we are told, is now largely a problem of efficient management and most scarcities will be the result of poor planning or inadequate research. The central difference, from the viewpoint of conservation, between the New Deal and the New Frontier relates to the dominance of scientific research and science-oriented planning in resource management. Science and technology hold the keys to the kingdom of abundance--and planning, long a favorite whipping-boy of "practical" men, is now the one indispensable science. Aided by the men of science, in some resource sectors we have reversed our course: we produce more, waste less, and make the needs of the future an integral part of our computations. The result is that we can no longer explain away our shortcomings by pleading ignorance or incapacity. We have the insight and the power to conserve, and the existence of areas of quiet crisis indicts us, separately and collectively, for failure to act.

We are eyewitnesses to the longest broad jump of change in human history, and our singular conservation achievements make our failures all the more conspicuous. We have conquered outer and neglected the "inner" space that is our home; but in the process we have put a spur to science that has quickened the promise of life. While our agents of progress have solved problems in some resource areas, they have created a crisis in others. We mastered the art of atomic fission in the 1940's, and the continuing revolution in research will enable us to desalt the seas, turn shale rocks into oil, and breed energy from stones, but we may make a shambles of our common environment unless we act in time to save it.

Some of our most successful conservors--the research scientists and the scientific farmers, for example--have in many cases not considered themselves conservationists, while the contemporary disciples of Thoreau and Muir have too often drawn a circle that made them the sole custodians of the conservation concept. The conservation idea is as broad and complex as modern life itself and we must follow Pinchot's lead and adapt it to the resource problems of our generation.

As science opens up new avenues of abundance it also opens up new opportunities for exploitation--and the classic pattern of the past repeats itself. The modern land raiders, like their predecessors, insist always that the present is paramount and assert their rights to misuse the land. The operator of manufacturing plant that befouls the air, or the owner of a pulp mill that corrupts a river, who asks the insolent question, "Which is more important, payrolls or picnics?" is really saying something like this: "The public be damned! Let the government, or those who live downwind or downstream, undo the damage I have caused." Such materialistic thinking dismisses environment preservation as "mere esthetics."

This is also the implicit philosophy of the subdivider who bulldozes a streamside woodland, the billboard advertiser who blocks the highway with eyesores, the municipalities that dump sewage into bays and riverways.

It should be perfectly clear that no one has a "right" to pollute the air or water or despoil the last remaining areas of green countryside around our cities--any more than the 19th century raiders had a right to destroy the forests or the soil. Erosion of the soil is no more damaging than the present erosion of our total environment. Today, as in the last century, the most intolerable forms of waste are those which spoil the quality and usefulness of resources all must share.

The answer lies in a new public ethic, and new forms of social control. We can have clean air, clean rivers and a green countryside if we decide that our environment should have parity with payrolls and profits. Once, by law, we make abatement part of the cost of doing business, men in laboratories will quickly devise machines and gadgets to lessen the assault on the land.

But the erosion of our environment will continue until we make public rights paramount, and put the future first. The conservation of man must be our ultimate objective, and the pursuit of "progress" and the pursuit of happiness must be harmonized if, in the long run, our society is to succeed.

The task of wise resource management is now a joint venture between government, universities, and the managers of industry. Much of our success in conservation during this generation has resulted from the increasing commitment of American business to conservation research and conservation practices. By their very nature, governments must plan for the long haul and concentrate on long-term projects, but enlightened men of business have also learned that it is good business to look to the horizon. The creative competition of our industrial laboratories and the striving for more efficient use of raw materials has spurred constructive patterns of growth, while enabling us to use our resources with more insight.

The front line of conservation now stretches from uranium to wildlife, from salmon to soils, from wilderness to water, and any conservation inventory must include a review of our total public-private effort. The work of the sixties can be a stepping stone to a balanced future. We are now crossing into an entirely new watershed in the history of the conservation movement in the United States. We are doing so by necessity, because the path of land conservation that our government has used for more than half a century is running into a dead end.

Theodore Roosevelt's magnificent contribution to conservation was made by methods that are today becoming increasingly foreclosed to us. He was able to reach out into the public domain and by a stroke of the pen create, on land already owned by the government, the forest reserves and parks and wildlife lands that made his name synonymous with conservation. This is the pattern followed since that time in establishing most of our national forests in the West, national parks and other reserved areas.

Whether the method was donation or redesignation of parts of the public domain, the effect was the same--creation of new parks and reserves with very little financial outlay. It did not occur to many conservationists of that era that it would ever be necessary for the Federal Government to buy large tracts of land--like the Cape Cod National Seashore for park and conservation purposes.

City-bound youngsters in particular need the blessing of an available out-of-doors. They need access to beaches. They need places close by, yet removed, where they can walk. They need to discover an aspen leaf quivering in a faint breeze. They need a place to hunt lizards.

So what do we do? How do we make sure that the areas we need are available? Last February President Kennedy sent to the Congress proposed legislation to help assure to us and our children permanent access to our outdoor heritage. I refer to the Land and Water Conservation Fund proposal and I commend the measure to you.

The monies in the proposed Fund would be split about 60-40 between the States and the Federal Government. The States, which would be asked to provide matching funds, could use their share for planning, acquisition and development of needed State recreation lands and waters. The Federal share would be available for needed acquisition in the National Park System, the National Forest System, for preservation of endangered fish and wildlife and for refuge recreation needs.

The proposed Land and Water Conservation Fund involves no new taxes. Instead, it would be based in part on a system of user fees at Federal recreation lands and waters, proceeds from sale of surplus Federal real property, allocation of the existing 4¢ tax on marine fuels used in pleasure craft, and repayable advance appropriations. The charge could take the form of a Conservation windshield sticker. This Conservation sticker could well become an eloquent symbol and rallying point for the Nation's outdoor enthusiasts.

Monies from the Fund would be available upon appropriation by the Congress. This would be the money that would help us, among other purposes, to obtain for all the public some of the few remaining outstanding outdoor recreation areas such as Fire Island, Assateague, Oregon Dunes, Ozark Rivers, Allagash, Sleeping Bear and Pictured Rocks which are as yet relatively unspoiled.

Maybe we can carve a Canyonlands National Park in Utah or a great basin park in Nevada out of land already owned by the public. Here and there, occasionally, another area. But not many. Most of what we get from now on, we will have to buy. We would hope this would include a variety of types of recreation land... areas for high-density use and more remote lands as well where we could partake of the isolation where I for one find rest when my soul is weary.

We are going to have to buy almost all the additional outdoor recreation areas we need, and let me say that there won't be any wilderness and few areas of any kind where you can enjoy a reasonable degree of isolation unless we develop an effective system of outdoor recreation area classification...zoning, if you will. The need is to establish enough of each kind of outdoor recreation opportunity to satisfy public pressures without destroying the resource. Ninety percent of us seek the out-of-doors, according to the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission. Most people enjoy the simple activities--scenic driving, walking, swimming and the like. Some of us hike, climb mountains, or go canoeing.

And, because of that fact, I would anticipate that you will give your wholehearted support to the Land and Water Conservation Fund bill. The reason is simple: the monies in the Fund will provide the facilities that will give the vast majority of our people opportunity to participate in a variety of worthwhile outdoor activities.

There is one recreation resource, however, that cannot be replaced or purchased at any price. That resource is true wilderness.

Nature is still the master architect, and all parts of the natural world, from minerals and marine life to the gulf streams of the oceans and the jet stream of the upper atmosphere, obey a single set of laws.

It is in relation to this wilderness resource that the limitations of science are most apparent. It is here that our assumption that science can indefinitely provide for a proliferating population founders completely. None of our resources is infinite, but wilderness is the most finite of all. It is the most expendable of our basic resources. As a culture develops, wilderness is the last resource to acquire value. As a culture feels the pressure of population, wilderness will be the first to be consumed.

Let there be no doubt about this: If there is an irreconcilable conflict between wilderness and water, a people feeling the ominous pressure of population will sacrifice the wilderness to get the water. The same is true of other resources--our parks and wilderness areas are, by a ratio that is arithmetical, threatened by each incremental increase in population! The conflict need not even be real. All that is necessary is that enough people believe there is a conflict between wilderness and water, or between wilderness and lumber, and the demands to sacrifice the wilderness will become irresistible.

What will happen to the <u>quality</u> of life as we approach the point where the available natural areas of the continent offer standing room only? As population crowds in on us, it will surely be the quality experience that is sacrificed first--the kind of unique experience offered by wilderness. There will still be available the kind of outdoor experience that can be enjoyed today at amusement parks on the Fourth of July. And this may, indeed, be the <u>only</u> kind of outdoor experience available if we race blindly ahead down the road of "growth and progress."

We can only guess what will happen to the individual as the pressures of overcrowding increasingly bear down on him, as the subtle diseases of overcivilization take their toll on his mind and body. It may be that in the long run overpopulation of our own country will be a grave threat to the most important freedom of all--the freedom each person must have to maintain his own integrity, to be true to his natural self.

When the last census showed that the State of Vermont had not gained in population, one of its most distinguished citizens, Robert Frost, said he was glad it had not. "We want to grow right," he said; and I commend his words to you today.

What does it mean to "grow right?" I would say that it means, among other things, to grow in such a way as to leave room for the quality experience, particularly in nature. It is to grow in such a way that our grandchildren will still be able to see in some places the natural shapes of the land, will be able to find surcease from the tensions of modern life among the God-given forms of mountains and trees and streams and unspoiled beaches.

Unlike many countries of Europe and Asia that have used up all their vacant lands, we still have an option in America. We still have open space and wildlands to preserve--lands that still exist in their pristine splendor--or something close to it. Let us then make the choice intelligently as free men considering the welfare of future generations.

One of America's great contributions to the world has been the national park idea, the wilderness idea, the principle of preserving for all time--future generations willing--the finest of our scenic forests and deserts and mountains and shorelines.

I am suggesting that if this magnificent principle is not to be lost in the chaos of unplanned growth, it is time for us to take a further step. I am suggesting that the United States set an example of how to plan the best relationship of human beings to their environment, that we give solemn attention to the matter of developing the optimum man-land ratio--the ratio which would result not only in the "highest and best use" of the land but the highest and best development of free men.

We can begin by asking the right questions: What is the ideal relationship of men to nature? What is the optimum population for a given environment? How can we maintain the quality of life and not be submerged by quantity?

President Kennedy eloquently expressed our common objective when he said: "I don't think there is anything that could occupy our attention with more distinction than trying to preserve for those who come after us this beautiful country which we have inherited."

In the years ahead our decisions on resource policy must always reflect our highest aspirations. If we plan the use of our land and the development of our resources so that material progress and the creation of a life-giving environment go hand-in-hand, we will not only ensure our own prosperity but will, as well, leave a rich legacy for those who follow.

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