

Senator Moss. Do you envisage the possibility that there might be a company now or in the near future which felt that it had done research and development work already and was not prepared to move right into phase 2 and, therefore, should they be able to proceed into phase 2?

Mr. FISHER. I am not knowledgeable sufficiently of what the different companies may have been doing in the last couple of years, particularly, really to answer that question. I think time would have to pass in any event so that the Department could work out and be reasonably sure of the kind of conservation and other conditions it would want to specify in any leasing. In the interim, even those companies that have made what they would regard as good progress in research and development might want to continue.

Senator Moss. I take it, from your testimony, that although you caution that all safeguards must be developed on conservation and these other matters, that nevertheless you think the time is here to be pushing ahead with the development of the processes for the extraction of oil from oil shale?

Mr. FISHER. Yes. I think the five-point program is a good one and will move us forward toward a sensible development of what potentially is just a tremendous resource for the American people. And I would, myself, wish us to be somewhat more positive, even aggressive, than we have been in the past, but never forgetting the safeguards that will have to be brought forward and made a part of the development.

Senator Moss. Thank you. I do appreciate your testimony and we all appreciate your fine service as Chairman of the Oil Shale Advisory Board. It is valuable, indeed, to have your counsel before this committee. Some of the other Senators may have some questions. Senator Allott?

Senator ALLOTT. Yes, thank you.

Mr. Fisher, I would like to ask you about your thoughts on this: The Secretary made five points in his announcement, the first being the action to clear title, the second the blocking-up program, the third, the provisional development of leases, the fourth, *in situ* retorting, and the fifth, governmental research. Now, looking forward to the future as development of oil shale becomes a viable part of our economy, can you see, even if we proceed at a rapid pace, any possibility of the creation of a going oil shale industry in the next year?

Mr. FISHER. Well, no, I cannot really see it within the next year.

Senator ALLOTT. The point I want to make is, I think that at the very, very best we are looking ahead 3 to 5 years under the most absolute favorable circumstances, are we not?

Mr. FISHER. I would think so; yes.

Senator ALLOTT. So that we should not take anything in your statement to mean that there should be any letdown or slowing down process in going into these five points that the Secretary has suggested here, because, even if we go into these five points full blast, we are still several years away from a viable industry.

Mr. FISHER. That is my belief; yes.

Senator ALLOTT. I wanted to be sure that it was, because I think this is true.