

Mr. DOUGLAS. I have seen what purports to be a signed letter by Mr. Zweifel in which he states that he has filed approximately 20,000 claims on approximately 4 million acres. While in Rio Blanco County at Meeker I was kindly given a map of the filings in that county which was prepared by Mr. Robert White, who is an abstractor, I believe, in Rio Blanco County, which shows that virtually all of the shale lands in Rio Blanco County have been filed on during this 22-month period, with some overlap of the pre-1920 filings, but the recent filings are very clear.

Now, much the same thing, I am told, has been going on in other shale oil counties in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. I did not have the time nor resources to make a trip through all these other counties, not even in Moffat, which is, I believe, just north of Rio Blanco. And so I can only speak of what I definitely know and have seen. I suggest, and indeed I urge, that this committee send agents into these and other counties to verify my statements, and to see how extensively these filings actually are.

I must admit I was shocked by this discovery, for if these claims are ultimately validated and patented, then hundreds of thousands of publicly owned acres which are worth in the trillions of dollars, and on which the American public could ultimately collect—and I use the words ultimately rather than immediately—hundreds of millions of dollars from leases and royalties, that this great resources may be taken over by a few. Gentlemen, enormous sums are at stake.

Now, it should be noted, as Senator Allott brought out yesterday, Mr. Zweifel and others are ostensibly filing for minerals rather than for oil; namely, for dawsonite from which they will derive aluminum, nahcolite which has sodium in it, and incidentally silver. He throws in a few silver claims, too. But under the mining, crushing, and retorting process which is the present conventional process, it would be impossible to extract these minerals without also extracting the oil. Under this process the two, oil and minerals, are bound up together, and Zweifel and any principals which he now may have or may have in the future will almost certainly inherit the oil if they take over the minerals.

I am aware of the fact that the Mineral Act of 1872 unfortunately does not limit the number of mineral claims upon which a man can file. But I am sure that this act, written at the time of the individual prospector, with a mule and a wash pan, so to speak, was never intended by the people who passed this act to be so interpreted that a few men could corner the great natural resources of the Nation, and take over for themselves hundreds of millions of dollars of publicly owned resources.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that it is the natural heritage of the American people that these great resources belong to the Nation and to the people of the United States. Someone referred obliquely yesterday to this as being the doctrine of Karl Marx. I think it is the doctrine of the great conservationists of this country, beginning with Theodore Roosevelt, who laid down his program in the Conservation Congress of 1909. For some months in 1930 I worked with the great Governor of Pennsylvania, Gifford Pinchot, and I know this was his doctrine, and I know Tom Walsh, the great Senator from Montana, and Burt