

is adequate to deal with these matters and it should not be taken away from them. And then he made the statement that he had only four men in the Denver office who passed on all these matters. What I would like to suggest is this: If he says he cannot attack 20,000 claims at once, let him go into the Piceance Basin and take action on the claims of Rio Blanco and Garfield Counties, which are the richest, as far as the oil shale is concerned, in Colorado. Let him go in there and make a frontal attack. Let him hire 30 attorneys; let him hire engineers. There are literally millions, possibly hundreds of millions, possibly trillions of dollars at stake. This should be done instead of more or less supinely—forgive me for saying that—allowing these claims to go by default, with no challenge.

I will be glad to go out there with anyone. You could get a group down in Green River and go from county to county, and photostat the documents.

Senator Moss. There is the tough problem. Any recommendation of the committee as to what we might either recommend to the Department or, as Senator Allott was trying to elicit, any recommendation as to what we might do legislatively—

Mr. DOUGLAS. Yes.

Senator Moss (continuing). To break this impasse, we would like to know.

Mr. DOUGLAS. The difficulty with legislation—the difficulty with amending the law of 1872 and placing a limit on the number of claims a person can file is locking the door after the horse has been stolen.

Senator Moss. Right, ex post facto.

Mr. DOUGLAS. Virtually all of this land has been claimed. As I used to go out by plane or train through this territory on the way to California I would say, "Nobody is ever going to claim this. This will always be Government land." But now it is claimed.

Mr. BARRY. Well, now, if Senator Douglas can persuade a majority of the House and of the Senate to give me 30 lawyers, I would have no difficulty in assigning them to tasks in connection with attacking these claims, and I am sure I can do it much quicker than with my present staff. I sincerely believe—and I have studied this matter, and I think I understand what the mining law is and what the particular problem in this area is—that this would not be a prudent expenditure of money. I think a very large number of these claims will never be advanced seriously at any point. I think we probably will have to run a contest through on the issue of whether dawsonite is locatable and, once that has been decided by the courts, anyone who has a dawsonite claim is going to throw it in the wastebasket. We are not even going to bother contesting it. Any company that wants to lease will go ahead and spend is money and not worry.

Senator Moss. Can we not get that started right away?

Mr. DOUGLAS. One final remark if I may. These claims are contiguous, quarter sections side by side. Why cannot 200 to 300 filings at once be attacked?

Mr. BARRY. We could.

Mr. DOUGLAS. There is a court of public opinion, you know, in this business, as well as an administrative court, and the district and circuit and supreme courts of the land. This case will be tried in the court of