

of the respective agencies might be at least in the initial drafts, are loaded, so to speak, with their particular expertise, a biased, if you will, approach.

During the interagency dialog, it shapes itself ultimately into a more formal and unified position, frequently affecting various individual think pieces, portions of which are sometimes dismissed because the priorities are such that they may be too far down the ladder to rank in the ultimate piece.

The background of this particular report is that the Treasury's balance-of-payments inputs, if you will, were made at different times in individual segments during the course of interagency discussions.

Senator HATFIELD. Let me ask another question—

Mr. PETTY. Excuse me, sir. It wasn't, however, until the end of December that the various individual items were collected into one paper.

Senator HATFIELD. Then in other words this group of staff members of your agency were not backgrounded in the field of forestry?

Mr. PETTY. No, sir.

Senator HATFIELD. Professionally or technically qualified to speak in terms of sound forest management, but rather this was material that they had gathered from I suppose the various agencies that deal with the forest program?

Mr. PETTY. And many publications.

Senator HATFIELD. Publications?

Mr. PETTY. Certainly.

Senator HATFIELD. In a think piece, do you feel that posing questions and recommending solutions are both appropriate components to what we are trying to create as interagency dialog?

Mr. PETTY. I can imagine cases, sir, where it would be and where it would not be as well. I don't think it is a necessary ingredient to achieve this.

Senator HATFIELD. I can see with you where it would perhaps be appropriate to gather from other publications, from other agencies who are experts in the field certain data and discuss it within your agency, staff people, and then pose certain questions.

What really confounds me though is where such a think piece includes specific recommendations for solving a problem without any evidence that you have really engaged in dialog or that you have any benefit from those who are experts in the field before you reached your conclusions that led to recommendations.

It is that phase of your report that disturbs me, not that they may not be valid conclusions, but it is just the process by which you have gone through to go that far to reach conclusions without the benefit of expert testimony or expert—

Mr. PETTY. I think some aspects of your statement, sir; I would concur with. I think that the handling of this report failed in terms of both public relations and communications.

Senator HATFIELD. Do you know whether or not they took into consideration the statutes that set up the responsibilities of the Forestry Department, such as the Organic Act on the National Forests adopted June 4, 1897, or the one April 12, 1926, or the Secretary of Agriculture's regulations dated August 1936, and many others, which outline the responsibilities and duties of such agencies dealing with a great natural resource?