

It is our contention that much of the land now being acquired could better serve the American public if left in taxpaying private ownership. These lands would contribute substantially if recreational developments on private lands received encouragement from our various governmental levels.

My company is a major landowner and, as such, we have inventoried our lands to determine which combination of uses, or perhaps which single use, will provide the greatest return in the long run. In some areas sale or lease of summer home sites appears best, in others long-term hunting rights may be acquired by a sportsmen's club. We are experimenting with camping and other recreational facility development for fee use and are quite confident these will return their costs and fair return on the investment as well, despite many obstacles.

Last year the National Forest Products Association sponsored a study to determine some of the barriers to increased use of private lands for recreation. A copy of that study, "Obstacles to the Recreational Use of Private Forest Lands" accompanies my statement. This is a summary of economic and legal problems encountered by private landowners and includes a discussion of possible solutions through administrative and legislative action at the State or Federal level.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to present these thoughts.

Senator CHURCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Orell.

I have received a letter from Mr. Royce G. Cox, whom you may know, chairman of the Idaho Forest Industries Committee, and he emphasizes some of the points that you have made in your testimony today, you and Mr. Fitzgerald, both, and I think this would be an appropriate place in the record to include this letter, along with the testimony you gentlemen have given.

(The letter follows:)

IDAHO FOREST INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE,
Lewiston, Idaho, February 1, 1968.

Hon. FRANK CHURCH,
U.S. Senator,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR CHURCH: Because of the great pressure on federal public funds to finance the multiplicity of government programs and the additional fiscal exigencies created by the Vietnam war and other international emergencies, I am sure you are concerned about the problem of maintaining some reasonable relationship between government spending and revenues.

May I suggest one area where a substantial cut in federal expenditures could be made without hurting essential programs? I refer to the ambitious land acquisition of the federal government and the cost-sharing program in land acquisition by the states.

Federal ownership of land now totals more than 770,000,000 acres. Federal land acquisitions have averaged over 1,000,000 acres annually since the Weeks Act was passed in 1911. More than 39% of the nation's land base is now removed from the tax rolls, including lands owned by federal, state, and local governments, and Indian acreage managed by the government.

In spite of this excessive federal land ownership, Congress is faced with continuing proposals for additional acquisitions, many of which are for non-essential purposes. During the fiscal year 1966-67, \$287 million was spent by the federal government for land acquisition. We have seen estimates indicating an expenditure of \$3.6 billion (in 1966 dollars) for the combined federal and state outdoor recreation projects to be financed under the Land and Water Conservation Fund during the fiscal years 1968 to 1977. This figure could be increased to 50% more, or as high as \$5.4 billion, as the result of price escalation and inflation, much of which is resulting from government competition in land acquisition.