

...uses to which we have put our natural resources, but by the way in which we view those natural resources. The distinction between use and view is an important distinction. Such a distinction is not meant to suggest that use and view are polarities. Indeed, they are closely interrelated.

Those who first came to the North American continent must have been struck by the magnificence and abundance of our natural resources—the timber, the game, the water, the very spaciousness led inevitably to the view that the cornucopia was endlessly full. Indeed, this sense of abundance was manifested in many of the landscape paintings and diaries of early settlers and travelers.

The point is, Mr. Chairman, that for a long time in America's history most Americans had little, if any, awareness that our natural resources would, or even could, have a limit. Thus, during the time of our national expansion, we found little attention being paid to the wholesale devastation of our landscape, of our minerals, of our water, and, sad to say, in some cases, of our human resources. But as we became more adept at recognizing the role of government in helping to solve problems, the more we saw government reflecting the complexities of the times.

The present departments of government came about because problems were recognized. This is most particularly true of the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Commerce.

The Department of the Interior, established in 1849, came about as a result of the long-established recognition that we had untold acres of land which required orderly development. The settling of the West was due in no small way to the fact that the Federal Government took a direct hand in that settlement.

In 1889 we established the Department of Agriculture because we had long since become aware that the practice of mining farm lands no longer had the easy out of abandonment for new vistas. Thus, one of the chief functions of the Department of Agriculture was the pursuit of scientific farming.

During the Progressive Era, more and more Americans became aware of the irrational pillage which our natural resources were undergoing. One of the answers to such pillage was the establishment of the Department of Commerce in 1903. The effort to regulate commerce was as much an effort to save our natural resources as it was to regulate the excesses of business.

REDESIGNATE THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AS THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION,
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