

one, if they did. So I think in the interest of time, I will just proceed to read my statement and then offer myself to questioning from you and Mr. Miller.

A little over a year ago, former Secretary John Gardner, concerned with the extent to which the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was meeting its responsibilities in providing Americans with environmental protection, created a six-member task force on environmental health.

I had the good fortune of being designated by the Secretary to chair that task force.

The six members represented a variety of disciplines. Our charge was to recommend to the Secretary the goals, priorities and strategy to cope with environmental threats to man's health and welfare.

From beginning to end of our work, the single, most constant theme we heard and understood was the urgency for action. We are in an emergency to prevent the destruction of our physical environment, yet we are not even appropriating authorized dollars.

We undertook our assignment from the view of how the Secretary could best direct the Department's resources so as to most effectively discharge its responsibility as assigned by congressional legislation.

Thus our work was essentially to recommend what needed to be done so that the Secretary could make the necessary decisions.

We attempted to make recommendations which could be implemented within the authority of existing statute. I believe about half of our recommendations would require no additional congressional authorization, albeit it would require some additional appropriation.

The remaining 50 percent, requiring congressional authority, are to a great degree responsive to implied congressional desire but lacking specific statute.

Only the metals and consumer protection goals represented a substantially new area of legislative activity. Subsequently, of course, consumer protection has come in for considerable interest by the Congress.

The task force decided initially that it would not spend its time re-proving that environmental problems existed or even testing the validity of the technical aspects of the problems. We felt there had been many experts preceding us who had made reports on the nature of the problem, and who evaluated much of the technical aspects related to the problem. We viewed our charge as recommending what should or could be done on the assumption that the problem was real and existing technical solutions valid.

What can be done takes two forms—today or now, and tomorrow or in the future. There is much less difference between these two time elements than most people realize. What we do now will determine what we have to do in the future. Our concern was to recommend action to be taken now that would bear upon Government's ability to deal with the future.

We also proceeded from the standpoint of what the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare should do in relation to State and local government, and the private sector.

Then we viewed all of our approaches from the context of what action the Secretary needed to take.