

My position on the State role does not eliminate a coordinator responsibility. All too often I think we find, that the approach now is to attempt to balance out the allocation of resources, rather than apply the resources that are available to the areas of most severe need.

Mr. DADDARIO. You believe that the agency involved ought to have flexible approach to this.

Mr. LINTON. Absolutely.

The task force believed that the private sector must play a cooperative role with the Federal Government.

Having identified the enemy and what the roles of the Government were in dealing with this enemy, it became a great temptation to deal from there on in generalities. How easy it would have been to set as the goal "defeat the enemy" and then go home, or to make recommendations like so many reports such as "we need better Federal-State relations."

The task force felt that there were plenty of others who could rapidly set out general philosophical goals.

We decided someone had to start with quantitative goals, and so we did. We set out 10 of them. We did it because we felt a strategy recommendation was meaningless unless it were pointed at some specifics.

There is nothing sacred about these goals stated in the report. They were thought to be most appropriate at the time we enumerated them as base points to test the effects of allocating resources. We expected they would give way to changing circumstances; and, if left to stand long enough unacted upon, would become outdated.

But goals of this nature are needed if the Department is to apply a strategy.

Outside of appropriations, only four of the goals required legislative approval; and two of those, water supply and waste management, called for a modification of existing authority.

The only new legislative authority would be for control of materials, trace metals and chemicals and consumer protection against health and safety hazards of appliances, clothing, food, and hazardous substances.

To undertake this responsibility would not, in my opinion, be as difficult as it seems at first glance, providing two ground rules are accepted.

One, the first standards set will not be the only standards set. Standards for these materials will have to be changed as new data and information on their effect on health is developed. The statute authorizing such a program will face the Congress with a basic public policy decision, to err on the side of caution or err on the side of economic expansion. I do not suggest it is an easy decision to make. But we need to make it, and to start the learning experience necessary to protect humanity from itself.

I believe that many of our environmental problems will be solved only by trial and error. The sooner we get started, the more experience we will have in trials and errors.

The second ground rule will be the establishment of a number of independent nonprofit testing organizations jointly underwritten by government and industry. These will have to adhere to rigid controls on its objectivity. But they are essential if many medium-size and small firms are to survive under the legal requirements of a consumer protection goal.