

of past mining, but also to the assessment of current conditions and to the future possibilities.

As is evident to even the casual reader of our report, it is recommended that a Federal surface mining program include the repair of past damage. But, in a time of hard priorities it becomes most important that we assure reclamation of future mined land. As we note in the report, a public dollar spent to assure the prevention of future damage can be many times more effective than one spent on repairing lands already damaged.

With the prompt support of the Congress in passing S. 3132, we can assure that the inventory of derelict acres soon will cease to grow larger.

Surface mine regulation is a national need, and it must have continuity beyond the changes that periodically occur in State and Federal administrations, and beyond the rise and fall of short-term agencies created for special purposes.

We believe that by means of the procedures proposed in S. 3132, we shall attain a method of determining the relative benefits of various land use alternatives, prior to mining. For a given mining site at a given time these alternatives might be:

- (a) surface mining without reclamation;
- (b) surface mining with reclamation;
- (c) underground mining only;
- (d) no mining whatsoever.

Based upon our national survey, we expect that instances will be found where surface mining should not be permitted at present because there is no technically feasible way of avoiding undue damage to the surroundings. It also is probable that situations will be found where it is needless to require that any reclamation be undertaken.

Undoubtedly, some will say that enactment of this bill will inhibit the development of the mining industry and cause severe economic losses. We all heard this in connection with our national water and air quality standards legislation. But industry has responded to those standards. They are reading the signs of the times. As I said the other day, in connection with water quality control hearings in the House, if industry continues to move at the tempo it has recently I think you are going to see some very significant improvement in our environment. Most members of industry know that the national sentiment strongly favors effective measures for the protection of our natural resources. I think this is truly encouraging. Industry is not complaining as much as some say. Industry wants to be partners in this effort—it's only good business.

It is gratifying to see the action that several States have begun in the past months to regulate some types of surface mining, or to strengthen existing regulations; but more needs to be done. Also, nearly three-quarters of the States have not yet moved.

S. 3132 proposes to step up this State action by creating a State-Federal relationship through which States would develop programs promoting an appropriate balance between the extraction of minerals and the need to preserve and protect the environment. The goals sought are not punitive nor are they visionary. On the contrary, we are offering a moderate, orderly, and practical approach, tailored to meet local needs and providing for detailed consideration of regional conditions. I would not suggest, for example, that the Bingham Canyon pit in Utah, or the Hull-Rust pit in Minnesota, be filled with earth and rocks when operations cease at those great metal mines.

We believe that Federal encouragement is needed to assure that all 50 States—not merely some—regulate surface mining, and that all forms of surface mining are covered. We further believe that some minimum basic requirements for such State action are required to serve the national interest and to assure some equity between States.

Remember that surface mining is not confined to the States where some controls already exist. Furthermore, both the physical effects of surface mining and the economic effect of such mining and its regulation pay no heed to State boundaries. Although some surface mining activity appears at first glance to influence only a small area of land, this may not be the case. Entire watersheds may be damaged if mining is undertaken without adequate recognition of the regional effects.

Sections 7 and 8 of this bill would coordinate Federal and State activities which, because of the wide diversity of climate, geology, topography, and land use throughout the United States, must recognize local conditions.