

tion. I want to, as a preliminary question, ask you, is this presentation to be considered as a report from the Department?

Mr. BAKER. My statement should be regarded as our legislative report on all three bills.

Senator METCALF. Fine. Go right ahead.

Mr. BAKER. Thank you very much. We are glad to have the opportunity to appear before you on the matter of restoring to productive condition the lands and related resources affected by surface mining.

It is especially pleasing for me to see my old time friend and one whose work I have long admired, the distinguished gentleman from Montana, in the chair.

I have a brief prepared statement, Mr. Chairman. I am going to read all of this and then my colleagues and I will respond to any questions that members of the committee may have.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, we don't have slides. I was going to suggest that the committee make it a part of their business to visit some of these areas that have been strip mined and the slides I hope will have stirred your interest sufficiently that you will still make that part of your business of your committee.

Senator METCALF. I want to say to my old friend that I think that every member of this committee is familiar with strip mining operations. We come from areas where we have observed strip mining and many of us have observed it in other States. We have been concerned about this as a former Governor to my left and a former Governor to my right in their States and as Senators from all the Western States.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Chairman, I know that is true and it seemed to me that your revisiting these as a body might have some usefulness in bringing national attention to the undertaking in which your committee now is engaged.

Senator METCALF. I think that is a splendid suggestion.

Mr. BAKER. Both S. 217 and S. 3126 would provide a Federal-State program for the regulation of future operations. They would provide a grant-in-aid program for the restoration of previously mined lands—both privately and publicly owned—and would establish a grant-in-aid program for research and technical assistance. Both have provisions for Federal acquisition of previously mined lands under certain conditions.

Two basic differences, in addition to others, between these two bills are (1) S. 217 would apply only to coal mined lands, whereas S. 3126 would apply to all surface or strip mined lands, and (2) S. 217 would be administered entirely by the Secretary of the Interior, whereas S. 3126 would be administered in part by the Secretary of the Interior and in part by the Secretary of Agriculture.

S. 3132 was introduced by Senator Jackson. It was cosponsored by Members who also introduced S. 217 and S. 3126. It is the bill submitted by the Secretary of the Interior to carry out part of the program outlined in President Johnson's message of March 8, "To Renew a Nation."

The program which would be authorized by S. 3132 would be directed toward future surface mine operations only. It would be a Federal-State cooperative program and would be administered by the Secretary of the Interior.