

STATEMENT OF HARRY M. CAUDILL, CHAIRMAN, CONGRESS FOR APPALACHIAN DEVELOPMENT, GROUP TO SAVE THE LAND AND PEOPLE, AND THE SIERRA CLUB; ACCOMPANIED BY GORDON K. EBERSOLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAD

Mr. CAUDILL. I would like to say Mr. Ebersole is the executive director for the Congress of Appalachian Development and my appearance here today, in addition to being on behalf of the Congress for Appalachian Development, is also for the Sierra Club and the Appalachian Group to Save the Land and People. The latter is made up of groups from Appalachia and other parts of the coal fields who have banded together in this organization to resist the destruction of their land by strip mining.

For a dozen years I have earnestly hoped to see the day when a committee of the U.S. Congress would inquire into the ravages inflicted on the American earth by surface mining. During those years we have seen industrial devastation spread like a gargantuan cancer across hundreds of thousands of acres and marveled that a democratic society could care so little about its future as to calmly destroy the land its descendants will inherit and inhabit.

During those years we have seen once-sparkling streams turn yellow and their channels choke with silt. We have seen valuable stands of second growth timber plowed under by bulldozers and broad and fertile fields reduced to desolate wastes. We have seen hundreds of families routed from their homes by mining corporations which blast and tear coal from under woodlots and orchards and, in at least one incredible instance, from beneath the resting places of the dead.

And we have seen deepening despair etched in the minds and hearts and faces of a multitude of once sturdy people—a people who even today sink with a dying land. And like many others, I have wondered—as I do now—whether the Nation is slipping into a self-devouring madness which visits the same ruin upon its own land that it once reserved for that ruled by its arch-enemy, Adolph Hitler.

Please accept my gratitude for this opportunity to testify in behalf of all my fellow mountaineers who are voiceless here, but are saddened by those vast forces which are wrecking so much of America the Beautiful. Let me express also, the alarm of the Sierra Club, whose 60,000 members are the organized conscience of the Nation in the conservation field and who, increasingly, are militantly determined that this Nation shall survive in beauty as well as in strength. The Sierra Club has a long and honorable tradition of defending the land from those grotesque assaults modern industrial man seems impelled to make upon it. It is my pleasure and privilege to declare the club's resolve to see our needs for raw materials and our need for a decent environment brought into harmony.

There are two great crises in America today. One is a crisis of people, white and black, who are impoverished and embittered and who, in their frustration and hatred threaten to burn down our cities, ruin our ancient political institutions, and bring down upon our necks the yoke of totalitarianism. The crisis could have been dealt with successfully a century ago when the slaves were newly freed and when great areas of new lands and huge economic expansion offered opportunity for the skilled and energetic. But for decades now the National Gov-