

The American population is growing rapidly; estimates of the U.S. Bureau of Census indicate a population of 300 million by the year 2000. We have now surpassed the 200 million mark. We are running full steam ahead on a course between diminishing natural resources and an ever-increasing population.

God gave us one creation and there will be no more, but it can be effectively diminished by industrial processes which include strip mining for coal and similar operations. Under any enlightened philosophy the present occupants of the land hold it in trust for future generations and are under a positive obligation to pass it on in a tolerable state.

Who will pay for the reclamation? We know, or we should know, that reclamation costs will be included in the price paid by the consumers. But if this is done, society will have discharged its responsibility to the future.

Recently one of the major coal companies in our area signed a contract with a Kansas power company for 12 million tons of coal to be delivered over a period of 20 years. At 3,000 tons of coal per acre, a total of 4,000 acres must be mined to achieve this goal.

We know this particular power company has a total of 199,625 customers. Figuring 200,000 customers, which they could easily have in 20 years, and figuring reclamation costs at \$300 per acre, this would amount to an increase of approximately—now get this—3 cents per customer per month, or 36 cents a year. We feel this will not cause a hardship to anyone.

No doubt a powerful lobby will oppose this strip mining law but no lobby is so potent, however, as a lobby of embittered citizens bent on protecting the beauty and prosperity of this Nation, and their tax money as well.

The counterattack against a grave danger to our welfare can begin this session of the 90th Congress. No more imperative business will come before this session than truly effective regulations of strip mining.

The coal companies advocate, "Leave us alone, we will take care of our own reclamation."

Mr. Chairman, the coal companies in our area have done practically nothing since they began mining 75 or 80 years ago. An attempt at restoration has been made but the majority of the mined lands still lie in complete destruction. They also advocate, "This is not the proper time to impose Federal legislation."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I advocate, "This is the time and this is the place." We must have Federal legislation, we must have rigid Federal legislation that will make the States shape up and get with it.

Some sources stress the spoilbanks will in time heal themselves. Now I have been on this earth more than 40 years. Some spoilbanks in our area were there 40 years before I came, and they have not healed themselves and they never will without help from the taxpayers.

If you would like to become sick at your stomachs, have your heart bleed for our future Americans, come into our area and watch the huge shovels rip, torture, and destroy the mother earth, God's greatest gift to man and the very thing which our existence entirely depends on. You will wonder how civilized man can be so cruel and yet advocate