

Senator METCALF. Our next witness is Mr. Coyle, president of the Precision Aerial Reclamation of Kentucky. Mr. Coyle, we are pleased to have you before us and you may go right ahead with your statement.

**STATEMENT OF WALTER A. COYLE, PRESIDENT, PRECISION
AERIAL RECLAMATION**

Mr. COYLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of this committee, I am Walter A. Coyle, president of Precision Aerial Reclamation, with headquarters in Middlesboro, Ky. I have been responsible for the pioneering of aircraft in several new phases of various industry involving very low-level mountain flying.

I was called into eastern Kentucky from my home in Scottsdale, Ariz., in February of this year and offered more or less a challenge to seed with an airplane approximately 1,200 of the roughest strip and auger mine acreage that could be found in the mountainous terrain around Middlesboro, Harlan, and Hazard, Ky. The feeling was, if the aircraft could complete this rough assignment successfully, it could be used in any of the mountainous Appalachian area.

The test was not only satisfactory, as confirmed here with photographs and a letter of confirmation by Kentucky State Area Supervisor Herbie Johnson of Middlesboro, Ky., but it far exceeded the coverage previously gotten by the outmoded methods of hand seeding and ground machinery.

With the aircraft, even the face of the high wall received good coverage of seed and fertilizer, as well as the lowest portions of the steep spills. I have been told it would have taken a ground crew of 40 to 50 people approximately 6 weeks to seed this acreage—but with one aircraft I successfully completed this 1,200 acres in 3 days. Since this time I have formed a company offering this aerial application service to the mine operators.

In my association with these mine operators, I have met no one who is opposed to vegetating and reclaiming the stripped or augered out areas. In fact many of the operators have gone to additional expense beyond the requirements of their State laws to see that the best job possible would be done in the reclamation of their projects.

In recent weeks I have been working in unison with the Surface Mine and Reclamation Association, headquartered in Pike County, Ky. Their chief objective is to erase the infamous image of the current surface miner to the general public and to make the general public aware of the new and modern methods the surface miner is using to reclaim the current acreage.

As you well know, the ill feeling of the general public borders very closely to contempt for these mine operators even though they are endeavoring, in the most expedient manner possible, to return their acreage to green grass and tree covered hillsides.

I feel that the current mine operators are being accused unjustly. I believe that this feeling of ill will and contempt is primarily brought about by the ever-present existence of the vast amount of orphan acreage that has been evident year after year for the residents of these States and the tourists visiting these States to observe. For those