

We felt that the Government's proposed regulations, under the guise of reclamation, unnecessarily took away freedom of action as normally enjoyed under our free enterprise system. So, we were not arguing with the objectives of mined land reclamation—it was the proposed method to which we objected.

In December of 1966 when the conference submitted its proposed regulations, a copy of which is submitted as exhibit D, the Department promised that it would study the proposal and comment back probably in January of 1967.

There was never any official response except that on July 20, 1967, we were shocked again to find a new and even more restrictive set of proposed regulations published by the Department of the Interior which completely ignored our prior comments and our proposed regulations.

Once more in December of 1967 we journeyed to Washington to again meet with the Department of the Interior. Our regulations were resubmitted, together with our explanation of the problems posed by the July 20 regulations, and we have heard nothing further.

Our second meeting, incidentally, was largely with a new group of people who apparently had no knowledge of our prior discussions with, and presentations to, the Department of the Interior.

Since we are now discussing Senate bills 3126 and 3132, it is perhaps not timely to review for you the Department of the Interior's proposed regulations. However, our comments on the Department of the Interior's proposed regulations of July 20, 1967, are set forth in exhibit E, which is submitted herewith.

The significant point to make is that we believe that we have in good faith attempted to work out solutions to the problem of achieving mined land reclamation, but that our good faith efforts and our comments and proposals have been largely ignored by the Department of the Interior. That we should be so ignored is of great concern to us. In such circumstances we can only look to the Congress for assistance.

I am sure you will find that we miners are good citizens. We don't go around tearing up the earth for the sheer joy of being destructive. We believe, and I am sure you share the belief, that the products of mining have made significant contributions to our society. The car you drive, the television set you enjoy, yes, even the fishhook used by the sportsman, all are products of mining.

Mining is a difficult profession. The good Lord gave us our minerals, but he failed to include a set of instructions with each property. All proposed regulations to date assume that in advance of exploration and mining the entire leased acreage, we can predetermine—

1. The precise location of the proposed mining operation.
2. The area where the overburden will be stored.
3. The amount of surface that will be disturbed.
4. The nature of the excavation.
5. The size of the piles of removed overburden and their location and design.

All of this for the entire leased area. Now, we can do this on each panel within the mine, not the entire mine. We must make our plans step by step. And, in our proposed regulations we say exactly that.

But the Department of the Interior wants more. They want to tell us where to drill, where to build roads, the size and types of equipment to be used for exploration, development, and extractive opera-