

work that the Department of the Interior is doing in conserving our Nation's land and waterways.

Therefore, I find myself coming before you today, with mixed emotions, because I am not at all certain that the real intent of this legislation is as clear as it could be.

I have reviewed the very graphic book entitled "Surface Mining and Our Environment" which was published by the Department of the Interior.

And, I must agree that any organization or individual with any feeling for conservation could not help but be moved by the scenes pictured in that book.

Our Nation must not allow vast acreages to be literally turned upside down and left as waste. The extraction of a relatively small amount of minerals from beneath the surface must not be allowed to destroy the value of the land which is left.

And, of course, steps should be taken to control the pollutants from mining operations. However, these adverse developments which I have just covered are not inherent to all forms of "Surface Mining" operations.

As this type of legislation has been under consideration in recent years, we have never felt we came under it as it was usually termed "strip mining."

But, because of the use of the words "surface mining" in this bill, which has a much larger scope, we are concerned.

In the quarrying of limestone, the destruction of thousands of acres of land, and the pollution of streams and rivers and resultant destruction of fish and wildlife does not occur.

Limestone quarries are relatively small, rarely do they cover more than a few acres. More often than not, they are situated away from populated areas, water pollution is not a factor since limestone in itself is a purifier of water and would enhance the growth of vegetation along waterways and improve the mineral content of the water.

Also, quarries are most generally permanent installations, much as a factory or utility. Because quarries are operated on this permanent basis, operators tend to be "good neighbors."

Many quarries, which have been caught up in the suburban spread of their localities, have long ago taken steps to screen their property with trees and plants, and new methods of blasting have virtually eliminated shock and noise to the surrounding community. Many other "good neighbor" policies are commonplace in the industry.

As I mentioned earlier, we have the impression that this legislation is being proposed to deal with "strip mining" alone. And, from our informal discussions of this matter with Interior Department officials, it was made quite clear to us that our industry was not considered a contributor to the pollution and devastation of our land.

It seems to us that the Congress, if it deems legislation necessary, should make the legislative record quite clear so that the respective States would realize that this industry does not need to be regulated to prevent the conditions outlined in section 3(b).

We, in the institute, are continually urging all limestone producers to be as "good neighbors" as possible. However, regulations to prevent the disruption of many acres of land, interfering with industry, agriculture, recreation, forestry, or contributing to floods, pollution