

as part of the operation area to be bonded, (13) The requirement for a "prospecting" permit in the West Virginia law, (14) Requirements that reclamation must be kept current with the mining operation as stated in the West Virginia and Kentucky laws, (15) The refusal to allow mining by an operator whose permit was previously revoked or bond forfeited without correction as stated in the West Virginia law, (16) The "high wall" and "back filling" treatment required by the Pennsylvania law.

We believe most firmly in the people's expressed desire to protect unique and scenic areas from surface mining operations and in the most appropriate revaluation that "man does not exist by bread alone." We, therefore, recommend that the Federal government make available matching funds to those states that have high, enforced reclamation standards and to others as they adopt them to be used to reclaim orphaned-mined lands that exist on both public and private lands. It is high time that we remove these ugly scars that blight the land and depress the economy. We also recommend that the Federal government seriously consider the establishment of a "mineral bank" similar to the soil bank but restricted to only those lands where mining is not recommended because of the inability to restore the land and to protect areas that have irreplaceable scenic and unique values.

While we have dealt mostly with the strip and surface mining of coal in this report, we have stated the need to have federal legislation covering all forms of surface mining. As reported in an Interior report, while the history of Appalachia is bound to coal, the histories of other regions are tied to other mineral deposits. The iron ranges of northern Michigan and Minnesota, copper from northern Michigan, Arizona, Montana, Utah, and Nevada; precious metals from Colorado, California, Idaho, South Dakota, and Nevada; and lead-zinc from Idaho, South Dakota, Colorado and Illinois; phosphates of Florida; the stone quarries, clay and gravel pits, all have contributed to the economics of their present regions and the mining of each has left scars on the landscape and together a vast acreage of derelict lands.

It is recognized that surface mining of some form or another, and to some degree, is practiced in all 50 states and approximately 39 states have no reclamation standards or requirements—proof enough that we need federal involvement.

The League endorses the concept of states participating in interstate compacts and agreements if there are assurances that no one participant will be able to dominate or have a veto over action necessary in the public interest. If such a compact would require that its members adopt surface mining controls on a level with those now in force in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania it could do much good. But the present Interstate Mining Compact is not a regulatory body and only requires that each state adopt minimum standards of reclamation. Any recommendation put forth by the Compact must first be acted on by each of the member states before such regulation can be enforced in said state—and therein, we believe, lies the "Achilles heel" of the Interstate Mining Compact. State action and Compact agreements should work in cooperation with federal controls, not replace them.

Government and mining officials tell us that we haven't yet begun to strip and surface mine the coal deposits and other minerals located near the tops of our mountains and across every region of our nation. As one native of Appalachia put it, "This could be a blessing to our people or a damnation depending on how we go about mining it and the degree of reclamation required."

In this respect we recall a statement made by the president of the Harmon Creek Coal Company, "That if for some reason the land cannot be restored, it should not be mined."

All of us recognize the magnitude of the problems with which we are dealing. While none of us have all the answers, we do believe, however, that if the Congress adopts legislation as recommended in Senate Bills S. 217 and S. 3126 we will have taken a giant step forward towards a solution to many of the problems related to strip and surface mining.

Mr. Chairman, we trust that, in some degree, we have been helpful to this Committee. Once again we express to you and the members of this Committee our appreciation for the opportunity of appearing here and the privilege of presenting our views on a most critical issue.

Senator METCALF. Are there any other witnesses? I know that many of the witnesses patiently waited and finally after a long wait filed their statement. If there are any other witnesses here, however, we will be glad to hear them at this time.