

the United States imported 14 of the 16 major metals or their ores. Currently, the United States is the major producer of only 8 of these 16 metals, and a major exporter of only 2 of them. In recent years, foreign countries have found it profitable to exploit their own mineral resources, and at the same time our own essential mineral resources are being rapidly depleted.

The problem of meeting the United States' demand for essential minerals is critical, and the mineral industry, in order to survive, must have a discovery rate consistent with its production. However, the discovery of new mineral deposits is very costly and time consuming. It has been estimated that sustained exploration in the United States at an annual expenditure rate of one million dollars might result in the average of one important discovery every 10 years. As part of the Strategic Minerals Development Program in the United States from 1939 through 1949, mineral occurrences totaling 10,071 were examined. Of these occurrences, only 1,053 developed some ore reserves and only one property became a major producer.

How can anyone believe that in the event of a national emergency, mineral production could be increased in a short time by opening new mines? Even if the minerals needed in such an emergency were already known, it would take from 2 to 5 years and cost several hundred thousand to several million dollars to place a mine in production.

A readily available supply of minerals is absolutely essential to the economic growth and security of our country, and we cannot lock up areas of known unexploited mineral deposits while the demand for minerals continues.

Each year in the United States, large areas of land in urban areas are being removed from possible mineral production through zoning regulations, and at the same time large areas of public domain are being withdrawn for recreational uses. Thus, each year the land in our country available for the production of minerals grows smaller as the demand for minerals grow larger. The Advisory Committee on Mineral Research in 1956 pointed out that 90 percent of the metallic wealth of the United States has come from less than 1,000 square miles of the more than 3,600,000 square miles of our nation's area.

The North Cascades is one of the remaining areas in the United States that has a potential for providing significant amounts of much-needed minerals, and this area should not be abandoned for less critical uses. In 1965 over \$148 million in gold, silver, copper, lead, and zinc ores and concentrates were imported into the United States. These metals occur in significant amounts in the North Cascades, and in the national interest, the management of the North Cascades should be such as to permit—in fact encourages—exploration for and production of the mineral resources of the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) No action be taken on proposed legislation until the results of the \$600,000, 3-year investigation of mineral resources in the 801,000-acre North Cascade Primitive area are published, so they will be readily available not only to Congress but also to all interested parties.

(2) No action be taken on proposed legislation until a similar mineral investigation is ordered and completed on the remaining 400,000 to 900,000 acres in the area being considered for classification.

(3) Upon completion of these investigations, all areas found to have mineral resources should be classified in such a way that the mineral resources will be open for exploration and development, subject to reasonable restrictions to protect recreational and other values.

Mr. TAYLOR. We will change the procedure just a bit. Let us hear Mr. John Biggs, director of the Washington State Department of Game.

STATEMENT OF JOHN A. BIGGS, DIRECTOR OF THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF GAME

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, my name is John A. Biggs. I am the director of the Washington State Department of Game and I am representing the Washington State Game Commission.