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REMARKS BY DR. STANLEY A. CAIN,
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, TO PARTICIPANTS IN A SHORT COURSE
IN ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL PARKS AND EQUIVALENT RESERVES,
MAY 28, 1965, AT BIG MEADOWS, SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK,
LURAY, VIRGINIA, SPONSORED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
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It is a special pleasure for me to speak to you today because your group experience began at the University of Michigan, which is my academic home base, and because some of your field experiences have been in the Appalachian Mountains region, long one of my favorite parts of this country. The fact that I am now with the Department of the Interior brings me before you today. I am particularly happy with this program that has brought together from 16 countries and 5 continents the leaders of the national park and nature preservation movement.

The first point I would make is that your interest is on the wave of the future. There are, of course, antecedents in many nations, and the love of nature and a desire to preserve fine examples of it are certainly not new. Nonetheless, many recent developments point to a worldwide movement that is growing and ripening in new and maturing national park systems. Let me recount some of them for you.

One is the fact that you are present here today as officials representing the interest of your governments. Also, there is now a Latin American Committee on National Parks of which the enthusiastic Dr. Maria Buchinger is Secretary and factotum.

Only this month I was asked by the Department of State to describe Interior's response to the request by the United Nations for cooperation of all nations in the important area of nature conservation. The United Nations request grew out of earlier efforts of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. In 1962 the First World Conference on National Parks was held in Seattle, Washington. Simultaneously a conference was held in Trinidad from which developed the Association for Tropical Biology. The Association has several hundred members, mostly from the Western Hemisphere, but included are botanists, zoologists, conservationists from every continent.

One of its first actions was the adoption of a resolution urging all nations to develop systems of preservation, especially of natural areas for natural history and related studies. An International Biological

Program is now being developed to which many nations are adhering and for which at least three dozen nations already have national committees sponsored by academies of science. One of the seven sections of this program is devoted to conservation of terrestrial, fresh water, and marine habitats for scientific purposes, including particularly rare and endangered examples of natural communities. A month ago, at a conference of Directors of Systematic Collections, a resolution was passed urging a crash program of nature preservation. Such is the groundswell of the wave of the future.

There is a sense of urgency in all of these inter-related movements. It arises from the current rapidity with which natural conditions are disappearing because of the rate at which the human population is growing, the consequent need for more farm and forest products, and man's greatly increased mechanical ability to "muck things up."

Technologic advances greatly enhance our ability to make the world yield food and other needed products; but the bulldozer has also become a symbol of man's thoughtless destruction of irreplaceable values.

It is for such reasons that I say you represent the wave of the future. Men of vision are coming to believe that necessary progress does not require the destruction of every last vestige of the natural world. We can have the means of sustenance for a human population of reasonable size and, at the same time, reserve some areas of nature for non-commercial human enjoyment and for scientific study. In the long run, these values may be more important to man than a little additional monetary wealth today.

My second point is one that I think is also extremely important. Because the great National Parks of the United States and many other countries are so impressive and highly valued by their people, there is a tendency to think only--or at least largely--in terms of parks. Also, because national parks are so popular, there is a tendency for governments to measure their value in attendance. However, parks are created for the dual purpose of preservation of great natural features and for the pleasure of the people. Yet these objectives cannot be met if the use of the parks by millions of persons causes the inherent values of such areas to deteriorate.

One cannot avoid certain conclusions. First: that there are needs for preservation that are not met by the great national parks alone.

Second: the human uses of parks must be restricted to those which are compatible with nature and which do not deteriorate and degrade the fundamental values for which the parks were created. I would like to develop these points further.

The National Park Service of the United States is an agency of the Federal Government. It is in the Department of the Interior. Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall has created an image of the Department as the national conservation agency with broad general responsibility for the wise management and use of the Nation's natural resources. As a result, Interior's image is becoming sharp. In my opinion, the National Park Service's image also needs to be brought into sharp focus. One reason for this is that the Service manages more than a dozen different kinds of areas. Beside the National Parks, Monuments, and Historic Sites, it manages a variety of areas which are primarily for recreation. Seashores, Lakeshores, Wild Rivers, and other National Recreation Areas do result in some degree of preservation of landscape from residential, industrial and other kinds of development. But to call them "parks" is to confuse them with the truly great jewels of the system -- Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains, and the new Canyonlands, to name a few.

Recently, Secretary Udall helped define the role of the National Park Service in a manner calculated to sharpen its image. He identified three categories of areas now included in the National Park System. They are:

Natural Areas
Historical Areas
Recreational Areas.

The first category includes the National Parks and Monuments which were created because of their outstanding natural values -- geological, biological, and scenic. The second includes those units of the system which were created to preserve historic and archeological structures and sites. The possibilities of the third major category, recreation areas, are myriad and include not only recreation based on nature and appropriate to it, but is being extended to include many kinds of mechanized and organized sports.

The advantage of thinking in terms of this fundamental three-parted division is that it will help keep from the parks and historical-archeological units those developments and visitor activities that are inimical to the purpose of preservation. Such intensive public uses and the developments

required by them should be confined to the recreational category.

The national need for preservation is not wholly satisfied by a national park system. In our country and in most of yours, a system of national forests is also of great importance. I believe that in most nations the national forests are managed according to what we now call multiple use. Although they are maintained primarily for the wise use of forested land for the production of timber and other forest products, national forests give a vast opportunity for fishing, hunting, hiking, and camping. But our National Forests include also an extensive system of wilderness areas for which preservation is the major and sometimes the sole purpose.

A great deal of nature preservation is also accomplished by the National Wildlife Refuge system, which includes many areas created largely to benefit migratory waterfowl, and the great Game Ranges which are usually for the preservation of large and often wide-ranging mammals.

The National Parks, National Monuments, National Forests, and National Wildlife Refuges usually are very large areas, yet despite the millions of acres of land and water which they contain, they do not collectively satisfy all of the needs of our Nation for nature preservation.

I would urge on our government and yours that national nature preservation systems include also numerous small areas of primitive, wild, and natural landscape. What I have in mind here are local, often small, natural areas: coral reefs, stretches of seashore and dunes, salt marshes and estuaries, inland ponds and small lakes, bogs, various distinctive forest types such as alpine cloud forests, rocky plains and escarpments.

It may be that the preservation of such areas should not be undertaken by national governments, but be left to State and local governments, and to the enterprise of private citizens. It is fortunate that such lands are generally of low economic value, or at least that they are not useful for agriculture. Such wild lands should be saved in every locality so that children can grow up with a knowledge of nature and take pleasure in natural beauty. Such opportunity should not be lost forever to humanity.

I would add yet another category to the wild lands to be preserved. It can be accommodated in most cases among the kinds of areas I have already mentioned. There is a need for areas where natural history and scientific research can be carried on over many years with reasonable

freedom from disturbing developments and use. Despite all our proud advances in science, we know remarkably little about nature. The science of ecology is still in its infancy. Although applicable also to managed forests and pastures and to agricultural fields, ecological knowledge of natural communities can provide an invaluable--I believe indispensable--baseline from which we can measure and evaluate the changes which man imposes on nature.

Finally, there is an urban aspect of the problems I have been mentioning. Cities need more open space and parks--breathing space. They also need more arboretums, botanical gardens, zoological parks, and aquaria. To some extent nature can be brought to man. However, as wonderful as such man-made features can be, they cannot take the place of natural communities.

As a third point, I wish to suggest some guidelines:

1. Public use of parks, or any other of the kinds of areas I have mentioned, should be restricted to those activities which are compatible with the purposes for which the areas were created. Although it is true that we are talking about public areas, I am convinced that the responsibility of the administrators of such areas is not to comply with every use for which there is some public demand. Because some segments of the public clamor for extensive road systems in parks and wilderness areas is not sufficient justification for uninhibited development. The consequence of yielding to these pressures would lead to a lower standard of quality in these natural areas. Because some people cannot walk and climb, or will not do so, does not justify building a road to every scenic overlook. Because some people like to ride in fast motorboats and to water ski is not a justification for permission to enjoy these activities everywhere. Because some people want to ride motorcycles, mechanized carts and jeeps on foot paths and horse trails is no reason to allow them to do so on every trail. Because some people like to see wilderness from the veranda of a modern hotel is not sufficient justification for building hotels within National Parks when their location outside a park would provide necessary accommodations without encroaching on the natural scene. These facilities and enjoyments are entirely appropriate to certain areas, but not to all areas. Tourism is wonderful. I like being a tourist myself. But the spirit of tourism should not, in my opinion, be the guiding principle of national park management.

2. The second guideline I would propose is that of land management based upon ecological principles. Only when the Park Manager understands the essentials of the inter-relations between plants and animals in

communities and of these, in turn, with the physical environment does he have a sound basis for his management decisions. This applies to wildlife and fish and to all forms of vegetation. The starting point for control of the use of land and water and such developments which this may require, is ecological knowledge--the fusion of knowledge of climate, geology, soils, vegetation, and animal life.

3. The next guideline is that of interpretation. Visitors to parks, forests, wilderness areas, and the like can get enjoyment and benefit from untutored and unsophisticated experiences. Beauty can be appreciated without someone pointing and saying: "See. Isn't that beautiful."

But for most people, the capacity for pleasure from an outdoor experience can be greatly enhanced by understanding. The interpretation of nature, history, and archeology is an accepted responsibility on public areas. I would urge upon you, however, that such is not enough. I would like to see the interpretation function extended to include the principles of conservation and, especially, to inform the public about the problems of nature preservation and management. A public that understands why there are certain regulations and practices in a park becomes a stout defender of parks against thoughtless encroachments.

4. Finally, there is the principle of protection. A national park may be difficult to establish. But its establishment serves no permanent end. It must be continually guarded against all kinds of deterioration and destruction. The conservation battle is never over. It must be fought and fought again.

My last words to you are a compliment and a challenge. Some of you, perhaps, may feel quite lonely. Your national park system may be young and insecure. You do not know how long and to what extent your government will support your efforts. You may not yet have a large public following to help you create a great national system of parks and related natural areas. You are devoted to the public interest, but the public may not be devoted to your efforts.

The government does not have to do the whole job. In the United States wealthy individuals and philanthropic foundations have aided the States and the Federal Government to acquire important National Parks and related areas. In many of your countries there are large private land holdings. In many cases the land use is not intensive, especially on remote areas which often are of park quality. Why not try to have such lands given to the public for parks? The spirit of philanthropy and public interest is not foreign to any people. It could be that all you have to do as individuals is implant the idea.

The challenge is this: The public, as such, never created a national park or any of these other areas I have been discussing. The idea originates with one or a very few persons. The drive to make a park proposal into an actuality is carried on by one or a very few persons. Millions will benefit, but millions do not get the job done. So you people, a mere handful, with your interest, ability, and dedication actually embody the park systems of the future.