OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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REMARKS BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR JOHN A. CARVER, JR., AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF GRAND COULEE DAM AND COLUMBIA BASIN PROJECT, COULEE DAM, WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 12, 1963

Before leaving Washington, I called Tom Foley of Senator Jackson's office to tell him about my research on what happened in the Interior Department 30 years ago, presumably the natal day of Grand Coulee Dam. Mr. Ickes' diary, I told him, was devoid of specific reference to the historic action, but I did find a reference which intrigued me. Secretary Ickes, in October, 1933, was annoyed:

"Our usual Public Works Board meeting was held at eleven o'clock this morning instead of two because some of the members wanted to go to the World Series baseball game between New York and Washington which was played here. I was finally persuaded to go to the ball game myself, although I had very much hesitation on account of many matters pending. When I came back to the office two and a half hours later, I was distinctly sorry that I had gone because I found an enormous lot of work waiting for me. I might as well confess, too, that I didn't enjoy the game very much. In the first place, I am not enthusiastic about baseball, and in the second place, it did lie somewhat on my conscience that I was away from the office when there was so much work to do. Since I haven't had a day's vacation all summer, I shouldn't have felt this way about it but the fact is that I did.

"Late this afternoon I had an appointment with the President in his study in the White House. We went over all the public works projects that we have been making allocations for since he left for Hyde Park, and he approved all of them . . . . ."

A similar type allocation for Grand Coulee had been approved earlier in the year. As one of their loyal fans, I can testify that the Senators baseball club has not been so thoughtless of the time of government officials by winning the American League pennant since.
President Kennedy, the other day, said at the dedication of Whiskeytown Dam and Reservoir, "The fact of the matter is, as a general rule, every time we bet on the future of this country, we win." There were those, 30 years ago, who said that we were making a bad bet. Critics compared Grand Coulee with the Pyramid of Egypt and pooh-poohed the idea that there would ever be a demand for its hydroelectric power.

The history of the great hydroelectric projects of the United States, reveals that the vision, the idea, the inspiration for each has a generation of development before the actual physical development begins. A generation has grown up since construction started in a major way; a generation had already passed from the time when the idea was conceived. Symbolically at least, we are observing at least a golden anniversary.

Another shared attribute of these great projects is that dedicated and inspired citizens must give much of their life's energy to keep the project alive. Editors such as Rufus Woods especially keep the public fires burning. Billy Clapp, Senator Clarence Dill, Jim O'Sullivan, Gale Matthews, John P. Simpson and Frank Bell were other leaders in this visionary effort. They had the vision to see that neither stockraising nor dry farming was the highest use of this fertile land. They recruited and pleaded and preached and enlisted, among others, Franklin D. Roosevelt to their cause. In his famous electric power speech at Portland in August 1932, the big power issue was Muscle Shoals, but the principle for federal investment for the optimum development for the people transcended that key project of the as yet unknown Tennessee Valley Administration. Jim Goodfellow and Guy Atkinson are the worthy representatives and survivors of this early group, representing all of them in their presence here today. Frank Banks and Al Darland are surrogates for builders of this 22-million ton structure.

I need not outline for you again what Grand Coulee has meant to the region, indeed, to the United States of America. Looking backward is a comfortable and a pleasant pastime when the past is filled with such a substantial and measurable accomplishment, but looking backward is a symptom of dotage; looking backward did not build Grand Coulee.

Struggles before us are like the ones which had to be overcome to get Grand Coulee project, in the same way that a Boeing 707 jet is like the old Boeing biplane that flew the first mail from Pasco to Elko by way of Boise. Both are airplanes, but the 707 is infinitely more complex.

The issues are the same, but the complexity and sophistication of the "systems" have increased quite as rapidly in the field of resource and conservation
struggles as they have in the field of air transportation. Men who must supply the dreams and vision for the generation ahead must have the gift to see the simplicity, rather than the complexity. The challenge to them is to keep the issues comprehensible to the American people, notwithstanding that the "systems" are so immensely complex. If we can't state the questions of public policy clearly, the American people will have no way of maintaining the control of the decision-making power which is their right and duty under our Constitution.

I looked, the other day, through President Truman's Water Resources Policy Commission report of 1950. The late great Morris Cooke was Chairman and the distinguished and departed fighter, Leland Olds, was a member. In the second volume entitled "Ten Rivers in America's Future", they undertook to state the policy issues for river development. Their statement has the merit of simplicity and comprehensibility. Thirteen years later, the policy dilemmas can be classified as they classified them: the distribution of benefits and responsibilities; the conflicts in beneficial use, the character and rate of development, and unified operation.

Under the heading of the distribution of benefits and responsibilities, the Cooke report mentions pollution control, a live current issue which seems to be getting ever more complex.

Under the heading of conflicts in beneficial use, we find we are still struggling between fish and dams, and we haven't agreed upon principles for planning and construction of water development facilities in areas basically dedicated to scenic values and wilderness use. Interests of reservation Indians in power sites is a very much alive question.

The Cooke report relegates to a relatively minor place the question of achieving uniform policy on the development of recreation facilities in reservoir areas. But what was said is still cogent: In the interest of balance and development of the Basin, both regionally and functionally, the recreation potential of multiple purpose reservoirs should be recognized, they say, by providing legislation for other water developing agencies along the general lines of the 1944 Flood Control Act. We are deeply immersed in trying to get this recommendation carried out at the present time.

This brief review of cycles in public consideration of water development projects suggests, I hope, that we not only have a duty to stay ahead of the requirements which our burgeoning population thrusts upon us but that there are basic public policy issues involved which ought to be articulated and discussed publicly.

Such public discussion seems no longer to be the fashion. We are prone to form our opinions upon slogans or catch phrases, more so, I think, than we were 30 or 50 years ago. The most pernicious symptom is the dying out of public
debate. The general feeling of helplessness which the average citizen feels when he faces an IBM computer which prints at 2,000 characters a minute the answers to questions which would take an army of humans a year to solve by old-fashioned methods, is experienced in the public consideration of some of these issues.

In the spirit of suggesting that there is still a chance for public debate of issues, I would like to take note of the fact that here in my own Western country people seem to be falling too readily into uncritical acceptance of the thesis that federal resource development programs are bad; that resource development on federal lands is a burden rather than a support to the private sector of the economy.

I don't think this negative mood has always existed. In the Western public land states, the federal public land and resource development programs have generally been popular, and the record supports this feeling of confidence. The proudest segment of our private enterprise economy is irrigated agriculture. The federal government has invested one and a quarter billion dollars of development capital into irrigation storage projects in the West. The effort, at least at the time and place the investments were made, has generally been appreciated.

These funds are 92 percent repaid to the Federal Treasury, which promotes a feeling of independence on the part of the beneficiaries, but in the areas affected, the public has understood that the initial financing made it possible for the local government treasuries and the local economy to benefit. They've known that the thirteen farming family opportunities are provided on every thousand acres of irrigated land; that private investment adds $425 to the federal investment on each acre; and that from such effort, public and private, comes average, crop production of $138 per acre. On an average, each thousand acres supports 66 jobs and 163 persons.

Last year the value of the gross crop production of this Project was $47 million—an increase of thirteen percent over 1961. Also in 1962 about 87,000 head of beef cattle passed through Project feed lots and the number of resident cattle increased twenty-five percent over 1961 to a total of about 60,000 head. And initial estimates from the Project's headquarters in Ephrata indicate that both the gross crop value and the total livestock population on the Project will again increase this year.

The farmers who have benefited from the great reclamation projects have not been thought to need education on the wisdom of the Reclamation Act of 1902, but they add their voices to a chorus of discontent.

The Reclamation Act, and the Flood Control Act of 1944, not only have brought stable agriculture and security from devastating floods, but under the multiple-purpose principle incorporated in the law have laid the foundation for a thriving industrial development.
Without water, there is no industrial life. Water, and the power generated from its fall from the mountains to the sea supports aluminum in the Northwest, phosphates in the mountain country, electronics and light industry, iron and steel, new building materials developments, and a myriad of other evidences of the growing importance of the West as an industrial center.

Another of our major national resources is timber. Four-fifths of America's merchantable coniferous timber is in the West, three-fifths of it in public ownership.

How this great resource is managed, both the public and the private segment, is a living memorial to a federal forester, Gifford Pinchot, for his philosophy of sustained yield and multiple use is now virtually universally accepted--by private owners as well as public.

Timber and related industries are a vital segment of the national economy, almost five percent of the total nationally and accounting for 3.3 million jobs. The management of public timber supported private business.

This resource is managed on sound conservation principles, but we are keenly aware of what the health of the industry dependent on federal timber means to the local communities in timbered areas.

The industry faces problems, but the basic problems do not arise from management of the federal resource, but rather from other economic forces, such as the accelerating rate of imports of Canadian lumber and the competition of new products derived from our technological prowess.

Many of the same things can be said about the great mineral industry of the West. Western lands produce almost every one of our minerals, including coal, copper, phosphates, uranium and petroleum, trillions of cubic feel of natural gas and all of our helium--much of this is on public lands open for private industry to extract and market under the mining laws or under leases. Gold, silver and lead and zinc are long time leaders in mineral statistics. Just in the eight mountain states, the mineral industry employs 85,000 men, with a payroll of almost half a billion dollars.

Minerals, like lumber and other basic materials, cannot be considered apart from transportation, imports, exports, technological changes, and national stockpiling requirements. These are serious problems, and we are acutely aware of the concern felt throughout the West about the health of the domestic minerals industry. These matters are receiving continuous attention, and we are confident that the American producers will continue the trend toward integration of their operations to be in a better position to meet the changing conditions affecting markets world-wide.
Furthermore, frontiers of new mineral development are being opened up by research. In the fossil fuels, particularly, resources of energy are found where none were recognized a generation ago. The oil shale resource of Colorado, Wyoming and Utah vastly expands our national petroleum reserves, and we are rapidly approaching the threshold of its development. Research, too, is enabling us to upgrade Western coals, to strengthen the Western steel industry. Coal pipelines may open coalfields of this region for the Pacific Coast market. Scientific inquiry in the minerals of the Western States must inevitably augment the stable economic base of this region.

The resources of the federal lands are not locked up. They do not compete with, but rather sustain, the private sector of the economy. A landmark piece of federal legislation, the Taylor Grazing Act brought stability to the livestock industry dependent on the federal range, and that industry is healthy and stable.

The livestock industry and the federal range managers are giving more and more attention to a cooperative effort toward rehabilitation of the range, and less attention to the acrimonious question of how it came to need rehabilitation. Conservation must be a cooperative effort, for the task to be done cannot be accomplished by either side alone.

In addition to providing the raw materials for the economy of the West and jobs for its people, the Federally owned public lands have made a direct dollars and cents contribution to those communities. Our part of this cooperation has included acceleration of our programs for vital soil and moisture and range rehabilitation work, as the President promised in his first conservation message to Congress in 1961. Over the total history of Federal stewardship, these public lands have produced revenues in excess of $3.1 billion—from the sale of the lands themselves and the mineral, timber and other resources they produce. Nearly two-thirds of this income has been realized in the past fifteen years.

Nearly one half of these revenues—about $1.5 billion—has been returned to the public land states. Over $680 million has been remitted to the states and counties for their own use to supplement tax revenues—to build schools and roads and to provide other public services. Almost $800 million was deposited in the Reclamation Fund and used for projects benefiting Western states in the form of irrigation and hydroelectric power projects. Thus, the western community has shared as a full partner in the reinvestment of public land income.

No one asserts that the system works entirely equitably. Limitations in the laws, for example, make it impossible for timber sales revenues paid to the States to be applied to general governmental purposes, but only to roads and schools. Some counties have surpluses in these funds, and serious deficiencies in their general fund, and no tax base for their general fund.
But the direct payments are not the most significant aspect. Of much more importance is the fact that the lands are available for many uses, both public and private. The public uses like watershed protection, recreation, flood control, and wildlife habitat do not preclude the private uses like livestock grazing, timber harvest, mining and mineral leasing. These are the backbone of the economy of the West.

Outdoor recreation also has become a big industry dependent in large part on federal land and federal water. Recreation is a twelve-billion dollar industry. The great richness of this region in the recreation resource is also an economic boon to the area which supports local business, local jobs, the whole local and regional economy.

A growing beneficial by-product of Grand Coulee Dam which is particularly appropriate to this date is the many scores of standing and running bodies of water that provide food and shelter for whole populations of fish and wildlife. The opening day of hunting season finds fine hunting opportunities arising from the plentiful supply of food and cover at the disposal of waterfowl and upland game on the Project. Last year in the tri-county area of Grant, Adams and Franklin counties which embrace the irrigated portion of the Project, 145,000 pheasants, 146,000 ducks and 14,000 geese were bagged by hunters from all over the state.

In the many seep lakes, wasteways and reservoirs on the Project the fare for the fisherman includes rainbow, brook, and german browns, silver salmon, crappies, bass, perch, catfish and ling.

Swimming, boating, camping and picnicking have also become major activities on the Project for Washingtonians and visitors from every state in the country.

Lake Roosevelt, a National Recreation Area administered by the National Park Service, has thirty-seven campgrounds. On one peak use day last year, 16,000 people were using the lake for recreation.

All of these resources are a part of the fabric of our regional and national life. Wise management is essential. The basic economy of the West is largely dependent on the stewardship of these resources. We are proud of the gains made under this stewardship, but we are deeply sensible of the demands of the future which call for a yet higher order.

A few minutes ago I quoted a few of the names of persons who played vital roles in working toward the creation of the Columbia Basin Project. They did a splendid job--today the Project is a fact.

Now more names are needed to see the Project through--to complete the vision.
Here at Grand Coulee Dam the goal is a third powerhouse which will stand on this site to give Grand Coulee Dam a total peak capacity of over five and one half million kilowatts, more than double its present capacity.

The future work on the Project will add an additional 570,000 acres of land to the irrigation portion of the Project.

The first major job to be completed to reach this goal will be the construction of the $13,000,000 Bacon Siphon and Tunnel. A major new Project irrigation canal, the East High Canal, still has to be built. This canal will be 103 miles long, will have a water-carrying capacity of 7,400 cubic feet of water per second and provide enough water to irrigate 386,000 acres of land.

Another principal Project canal, the East Low Canal, has to be enlarged and extended forty-three miles. Also the lands on the Wahluke Slope in the southwestern bulge of the Project area still have to be developed and six more pumping units have to be installed here at the pumping plant.

Obviously then, the future holds many big jobs. It is not a question of merely expending time and money—the support of the entire region will once again have to be mustered as it was in the early days of the Project. If this is done, then the Columbia Basin Project will indeed fulfill the vision of the past.

Thank you.