
Last Monday it was my privilege to speak to the New Mexico Cattle Growers gathered for their 51st annual convention here in Albuquerque, and to be made an honorary member of that Association. That same night I watched students of the Santa Fe Institute present dances for the President of the United States and the President of the Republic of Upper Volta, their ladies and guests at the White House in Washington. Last night I spoke to the National Association of Counties which was concluding its public land management congress at Reno, Nevada. Tomorrow morning I will speak to the Wilderness Conference of the Sierra Club in San Francisco.

I mention this rather demanding itinerary in order to make a couple of points. The obvious miracle of jet transportation has transformed and will continue to affect travel patterns. Airport cities are the hub of circles of tourist activity, a different pattern from the strung beads of cities on Route 66. Flying time, not distance, is the determining factor for a lot of people in vacation planning. The impact of this revolution is even felt in the Interior Department's National Park Service. A new airport, called the Yellowstone Airport, will soon have its inaugural.

The Indian dancers entertained our guest from the African Republic at the White House because he had expressed a desire to visit an Indian reservation. Bringing the dancers to the White House was a substitute arrangement required by the limitations of time. But the significant thing is that his request is typical of that of many of our foreign visitors. They have a vast curiosity about the Indian culture in America, and they all want to see our national parks.

I think this is very important in the matter of the problem of outflow of gold. The President, Secretary Udall, and others have reminded Americans of the wonders to be seen here at home.

This is good advice. But evidence of the mania for travel of West Europeans and the Japanese indicates that we may be passing up a marvelous new market. Our government has a program of encouraging people to see the
USA. I think a special effort ought to be made to give to these potential dollar-spenders authentic and useful information about what we have to offer, whether in New Mexico or Virginia, or other places in the United States.

You know, of course, that the Interior Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs is interested in helping Indians to develop recreation potential where they have it. We already have a measure of Indian villages as tourist magnets. The dusty ground of a pueblo is a marvelous platform to be used by the Indians, sometimes with tongue in cheek, but sometimes with great seriousness to give to a visitor his first instruction about the relationship of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indians. Our mail from the returned travelers accurately reflects the volume of travel in the travel season.

Much of the land area in the arid States is public land under the stewardship of the Interior Department. Most of it is unfenced, and even where the land is fenced there is generally a right of access to the public for hunting, fishing, rockhounding and back country jeeping. Such specialized activities are becoming more and more important to an area which seeks to broaden its appeal.

Thus you see that many of our activities in New Mexico make our Department a legitimate participant in this conference. Six hundred thousand people a year visited Carlsbad Caverns and this is a very important "industry" in Carlsbad. But there are also nine national monuments totaling almost 200,000 acres which serve between one and one and one-half million visitors annually. Six reservoirs covering nearly 100,000 acres furnish a great deal of water-based recreation opportunities and four national wildlife refuges containing more than 140,000 acres are operated by the Interior Department in this State.

My activities in the Interior Department were, until I was promoted three months ago, concentrated in the public land management area. I have from time to time entered into philosophical discussions with the Director of the National Park Service and with the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, both of which bureaus reported to me, about the similarities in the management problems which faced them. I do not know how the Park Service people always took it, but I sometimes compared the behavior of national park visitors to the behavior of cattle. In this desert country, the range is used in circles around the sources of water. You try to develop water by sinking wells in order to get the cows to move to a different part of the range in the dry country; salt is used for the same purpose in wetter areas. The Park Service puts in new campgrounds, visitor centers, or concession facilities to move the using public, for example, to relieve the pressure on the valley floor of the Yosemite. I have listened to Park Service rangers discuss visitor behavior and their herd instincts. This psychology must be understood in order to serve the public in confined areas such as at the caverns at Carlsbad and at Liberty Island in New York.

If there is a lesson in this, and I do not know that there is, it seems to me that it points to the desirability of a wider knowledge and understanding of why people go where they go and why they behave as they do when they get there.
To give you an example of another governmental dilemma: the Secretary of the Interior has long felt that it is unworthy for a national park to permit the sale of cheap junk novelty items in an area, for example, like New Mexico where authentic and fine native handicraft is available and where a greater market for this handicraft would mean a great deal to the Indians. As we present this proposition to the concessioners we get back the stock answer -- we are only giving the people what the people demand.

I bring this up to lead into a different question -- the question of the quality of the recreation or travel or park experience. The Congress of the United States and the members of the Interior Committees have, in carrying out their responsibilities to authorize national parks and appropriate money for their operation, held to quality standards. The park system itself is a source of great pride to the United States of America because standards are observed.

It is not just the Federal Government which can reap benefits from the application of quality standards. More and more communities, particularly those which have natural or historical values, have used zoning and other governmental powers to keep the style or feeling of an area as authentic as possible. Taos and Santa Fe, Georgetown, Colonial Williamsburg and the French Quarter of New Orleans would soon lose their attractiveness and their value as attractions if continuing attention was not given to quality.

I would like my final words to be about "interpretation". This is a general term to describe all the myriad ways by which the visitor to a national park area is given information. Interpretation is the descriptive leaflet; it is the audio-visual presentation at the Visitor Center; it is in the museum cases; in the markers and signs; it is the self-guiding trail and the talks by the ranger-naturalist. In a word, it is every technique for communicating to the visitor what there is in the park he is visiting.

Interpretation at a national park can be quite intensive but the visitor is at liberty to ignore it. With interpretation, the visitors are able to make choices, to plan, to be attracted to return, and often to be guided to alternative attractions off the beaten track when the more famed ones are getting the heaviest visitor use.

Up in Idaho, we are experimenting in a park proposal which has passed the Senate and is pending in the House on building a national historical park fundamentally around the idea that interpretation can be carried out without full jurisdiction over all of the historic areas. Here in New Mexico you are aware of the overlay of different periods of history on the same geography. In north central Idaho we have the site of conflict between Chief Joseph and the U. S. Army; the route of Lewis and Clark over the Lolo Trail and down the Clearwater and Snake; the earliest appearances of the missionaries, the great gold rush of the 1860's and some remaining ghost towns, and last year saw the last of the great log drives down the North Fork of the Clearwater River. There are 22 important historical sites in this area, all of which are to be included in a coordinated interpretive effort operated by the National Park Service. But only the three most significant sites will be
acquired by the Federal Government. Others will continue to be owned by private interests or other government agencies or the Indians.

Visitors to this new kind of national park will be able to get qualified professional help in understanding each of all of these various themes.

This kind of cooperation we think is very important between and among the public and private agencies, and we think it will set a new example in quality management of an area. At least we hope so.

These are just general observations about some of the ways in which our Department has contact with the subject of your conference. There are, of course, many others which I could mention at length. For example, I could tell you about the tremendous opportunities for travel abroad without leaving the USA. All of you already know about the Virgin Islands, but do you know that we are building a fine new hotel in Samoa? And for your jaded traveler who has seen everything, let me recommend two or three weeks in the Trust Territory Islands of the Pacific as fascinating, colorful, intriguing and as beautiful an area as can be found anywhere, but so far largely without hotels or modern creature comforts.

Summer before last before the earthquake, I rode Alaska's new Marine Highway, which is its ferry system, and saw literally hundreds of these camper trucks lined up at every ferry dock.

Not so long ago I helped to dedicate a restaurant on the Tamiami Trail in Florida built by the Miccosukee Indians who just a few years ago were literally at war with the United States. The art work for the restaurant was done here in New Mexico at the Santa Fe Institute, and it was outstandingly successful. Within three months after the restaurant was opened the business level had reached a point where considerable addition had to be planned.

I commend the Governor for calling this conference. I know that he will continue to work with all of the Interior Department people in this great State, ranging from Dan Beard of the National Park Service to Jim Anderson of the Bureau of Land Management and I hope we can all help each other.