REMARKS OF UNDER SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR JOHN A. CARVER, JR.,
BEFORE INDIANA'S FIRST GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
AND NATURAL BEAUTY, AT EVENING BANQUET DECEMBER 9, 1965

When President Johnson eighteen months ago
said that the "challenge of the next half century is
whether we have the wisdom to use our wealth to enrich
and elevate our national life, and to advance the quality
of our American civilization" few people in that audience
of Michigan students or in the accompanying press corps
were in a position to foretell how widely this thought
would spread within such a few months.

Part of the answer is found in the truism that
nothing is so powerful as an idea whose time has come.
Another part of the answer is found in the same Ann
Arbor speech. A model of organization, it not only stated
the objective, but also graphically portrayed the conditions
which bespoke its urgency and outlined a charter for
action.
The conditions of course have been stated many times in many ways. What the President said was that in fifty years there will be 460,000,000 Americans, four-fifths of them in urban areas, and that by the end of this century urban population would double, city land would double, and we would have to build homes, highways and facilities equal to all those built since this country was first settled. In effect, he said, "in the next 40 years we must rebuild the entire urban United States." In his outline of needs, he spoke of decay of city center, despoilment of suburb, and of housing and transportation and open space. He spoke also of natural beauty and parks and seashores.

And then the President said how we should accomplish these things:

"... we are going to assemble the best thought and the broadest knowledge from all over the world to find those answers for America."
I intend to establish working groups to prepare a series of White House conferences and meetings on the cities, on natural beauty, on the quality of education, and on other emerging challenges."

The President reminded the country that solutions were not to be found in massive programs in Washington nor solely on the strained resource of local authority. He said we ought to create "new concepts of cooperation, a creative federalism."

Action has followed, a crescendo of action in every corner of our system.

The President named a task force on natural beauty; many of the ideas in its report were put into specific program recommendations in the unprecedented and significant Message on Natural Beauty which the President sent to Congress in February.
In that message, he scheduled the White House Conference for the following May, at which was gathered every segment of our society to talk about action, action, action.

And the Congress responded, with bills like the Water Quality Control Act and the Highway Beautification Act. When he signed the latter, the President said "tonight you serve notice on the spoilers of our landscape that we will battle with all we have to preserve the beauty of our land and the beauty of our countryside."

The Executive Branch picked up the challenge, as excited by it as any private citizen. The message was clear--here was not a visionary idea without practicality, but a solid challenge to our ability to work the new concepts into existing programs, to be a good neighbor in the communities where we do business, to walk the extra mile not to be ourselves polluters or contributors to ugliness.

In the Interior Department, we've been delighted
at the results.

We are vitally concerned with minerals and with mining methods. Research on strip mine rehabilitation, on acid mine drainage which contributes to pollution, on metallurgy and on coal—these are our business. We could contribute to the national effort by seeing the relationships which help toward the solution to problems with rather than against the grain of existing economic forces.

Junked automobiles are an eyesore; they are also a valuable source of an important raw material used in the making of steel, and their collection surely is a social function which could not easily be left to individuals. Research toward getting the metal back into the steel-making process, from which they had been displaced by research which had developed taconite serves a double purpose.
Sulfur is a pollutant in stack gas. Sulfur is a valuable and needed mineral. Query: Can the sulfur be recovered in pure and usable form? Answer: It can. Result: (If it proves technologically and economically sound) A byproduct of pollution suppression which pays part of the cost of the treatment.

Coal as an adsorbent in filtering wastes from sewage-laden water is the subject of another experiment. It is likely that the coal will work, and after being used in this way, can then be a fuel, with the B.t.u. content increased.

I could go on with many other of our Department's programs, but let me mention one particular one to bring home another point. In the Northwest, we are a major supplier of energy and transmission thereof. It is appropriate, and good policy, that in this capacity we should lead the way in bringing the cost of underground installation of transmission down to acceptable limits.
On a much broader scale, we find the Federal Government imposing higher standards on itself, whether in the equipment on its cars to suppress exhaust pollution or in the quality of the design of its own structures.

The First Lady's magnificent leadership of the beautification effort in our Nation's Capital symbolizes the outpouring of citizen response at the community and State level all across the country.

Community improvement projects have sprung up in cities, large and small, in counties and in regional efforts. A "Keep Omaha Beautiful Association", a "Beautiful Metropolitan Nashville Commission", a "City Beautification by Citizen Participation Committee" in Hartford, and a "Beautification Association" in Fort Morgan, Colorado, are examples.

State conferences on natural beauty have been called in almost half the States. Governor Branigin's leadership in calling this, the first one of the Midwest,
is a measure of the leadership of the great State of Indiana. And as long as I am on this side of the line I can remind you that you are ahead of your neighbor Illinois which is planning a conference for the near future.

My wife is a member of the community committee in Arlington, Virginia, and she reminded me as I left this morning that Governor Harrison is holding his conference in Richmond today.

Sympathetic reverberations have turned up in corporate board rooms, and in small business enterprises as well. The Wall Street Journal reported last week the surprise of the business community at the favorable reaction from such steps as making a foundry look like a research institution or beautifying a much publicized harbor development in a certain midwestern State.
Broad industry response has been affirmative and constructive. The billboard industry, the auto junk yard business, the mining industry, all of which might have been expected to react pretty negatively, participated usefully in the White House Conference. The industry and trade association leadership in this area is affirmative and having results.

Action at all these levels, taking different form in different places, with changing emphasis and shifting centers of gravity, has brought us a long way.

But we are not gathered here to talk about whence we've come but where we are going.

The continuing challenge is leadership -- people who can mobilize all the diverse forces, suppress the divisive jealousies, coordinate the various efforts,
justify the needed budgets, attract the needed skills.

In this, I come not to teach, but to learn. For on my earlier visit to your State, I was lastingly impressed with what I saw in the way you were organizing for the management of your natural resources program.

When the Governor called John Mitchell to direct the newly authorized Department of Natural Resources, his confidence was immediately justified with the firm and forthright way in which Mr. Mitchell proceeded to mobilize the magnificent resources of this great State to the stated objectivies of the legislative charter and the Governor's direction and leadership. I am particularly envious at how he has organized the institutions of higher learning to bring intellectual effort to the natural resources management problems of this State.
I suspect that a realization that there was a connection between "natural beauty" and "natural resources" led to the structuring of this conference as it is. Governors' conferences are a tradition, but hitherto water has been the focus.

Water is still of prime interest, as I note from your agenda. Two of the items are directly related -- water supplies and control of pollution -- and water is very much a part of a third -- needs and resources for outdoor recreation. I've already mentioned in terms of my own Department's programs the subject of surface mining and reclamation, and highway beautification and scenic roads, so I can do little but agree that natural beauty and natural resources properly are closely related.

This close relationship appears in the statewide
recreation plan, which provides such excellent detail on the State's plans for acquisition of park and recreation land.

Let me close by returning to the President's phrase, "creative federalism".

The Federal Government has a responsibility, not only for direct programs but indirectly in how it carries on seemingly unrelated programs. States are really challenged, for the pressures on them are immense. Local communities and private enterprise, both big business and little business and all the business in between have responsibilities and opportunities.

Each of these segments of our society states its objectives a little differently. Even within the federal family the various federal departments and offices such as Commerce, Interior, Health, Education and
Welfare, Defense, the Department of Urban Affairs and its antecedent Housing and Home Finance Agency, Agriculture and many other agencies having responsibility for different phases will look at problems differently. Cities and suburbs; countryside; water and waterways; highways and roads; reclamation and restoration of damaged areas; financing; and getting people involved -- all of these are separable and sometimes jealous programs.

But as broad as this list is, it does not add up to making this primarily a federal program, any more than it is primarily a State program, a local program, or a business or a labor program.

Since what is at stake is our environment -- air, water, land, structures, natural and artificial features -- there is no definable proprietorship. We're all in it together.
The task is subject to no master plan, but it is subject to a national attitude.

At the present time that attitude is positive, and seems destined to remain so. The people have joined up for the duration.

As the mob swept by in the French Revolution, the revolutionist said, "I must go with them, for I am their leader."

The greatest of natural resources in Indiana or any State is the will and willingness of the people to achieve a goal. Indianans and all Americans want clean air, clean water, decent surroundings, a quality environment.

That will and willingness -- that natural resource -- is being harnessed right here, today.