REMARKS BY UNDER SECRETARY JOHN A. CARVER, JR., BEFORE THE GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON CALIFORNIA BEAUTY, AMBASSADOR HOTEL, LOS ANGELES, JANUARY 12, 1966

Your program shows that at this point you were to hear one of the authentic voices of modern-day conservation.

Stewart L. Udall, through his administration of the country's department of conservation under two Presidents, through his enunciation and elucidation of the new conservation in his magnificent book "The Quiet Crisis," and through his clear-voiced call to national action on significant conservation fronts over the whole country for the last five years, expected to be here.

He was the right man for your conference.

He has been a concerned activist in the subject matter of all of your panels--The New City and Open Space are vital things which matter to him, and planning and the esthetics of the environment of people on the move
are central to the action of his department under his guidance.

And the Governor's Conference on California Beauty is the right forum. California as the first State of our Union in population can offer both challenge and response on the scale which marked President Johnson's Conference on Natural Beauty last May. Governor Brown's leadership toward maintenance and enhancement of California's famed natural beauty is nationally known, and California's $150 million recreation bond issue is a model, as is the environmental planning program instituted under Governor Brown's leadership.

These Governors' conferences have been held all over the country--in none of them, I venture, will there be found a higher percentage of those who played an active role in the White House prototype, who contribute a larger proportion of their time to conservation causes,
who bring a higher level of professionalism and expertise to their civic responsibilities in the conservation area.

My Secretary sends his regrets, and his explanation that Cabinet duties prevent his being here. As the bearer of this news, I am expected to speak also to his and your subject.

It would not be fair for me to read the text which the Secretary would have had before him—it is a good speech, faithful to the Secretary's instructions as to what he wanted to say here today. But he would not have read it, either. Rather he would have sensed the spirit and mood of your meeting, captured its flavor, and lifted your hearts with his impromptu eloquence.

But each of us must be himself, and for better or worse I must talk about the subject as I see it—as a fascinating, compelling challenge to government, to business, and to individuals in the final third of the
twentieth century.

President Johnson fewer than twenty months ago called for "the wisdom to use our wealth to enrich and elevate our national life, and to advance the quality of our American civilization." Responding to the power of an idea whose time had come, the whole country took up the challenge—the Congress in an outpouring of conservation legislation, the business community in exciting new responses to the need for a quality environment, communities and State governments, and the Federal Government, and individual citizens.

It was not entirely automatic. The President said "we are going to assemble the best thought and the broadest knowledge." He did. He said we were going to have a White House Conference on natural beauty. We did.

The President reminded the country that the solutions were not to be found in massive programs in
Washington nor solely on the strained resources of local authority, and asked for "new concepts of cooperation, a creative federalism."

We have it.

So, as the second session of the 89th Congress takes up, and meets tonight to hear the State of the Union, we have accomplished prodigies on every front: A Water Quality Control Act and a Highway Beautification Act, for example, are landmarks, serving notice, in the President's words, "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 has picked up the challenge, as excited 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 ourselves to be polluters or contributors to ugliness.

In Interior, for example, we are vitally concerned with minerals and mining methods, research on strip mine rehabilitation, on acid mine drainage, on metallurgy and on coal. These are all regular parts of our program. They are now seen in the light of how they can contribute to the national effort for a quality environment.

Junked automobiles are an eyesore; they are also a valuable source of an important raw material used in steel making. Research toward getting the metal into that process, whence it was displaced by other Interior research on taconite, serves a double purpose.

An especially powerful force in this national effort has been the magnificent leadership of the First Lady, who has already sent her greetings to you through
the gracious Mrs. McNamara. The beautification of our Nation's Capital symbolizes the outpouring of citizen response at the community and State level. Community improvement projects have sprung up in large and small cities, 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.

Sympathetic reverberations have turned up in corporate board rooms, in small businesses, in large and small ways. The "Wall Street Journal" reports the surprise of a business at the good reaction to making its foundry look like a research institution.

Industry associations have constructively helped. The oil industry, the billboard industry, the auto junkyard
business, mining—all of these participated in the White House Conference, and many of them are in the State counterparts, like this one.

The historians are going to marvel at the action of the last two years.

What of the next two, twenty, fifty years. We are gathered to talk about where we are going, not whence we've come.

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 these matters, one comes to California to learn, not to teach.

For California is a leader.

A cabinet portfolio for Resources, held by the able Hugo Fisher and staffed with outstanding talent can,
and does, work closely with a conservation-oriented legislature. Your Sierra Club is the Nation's conservation conscience. Your Save-the-Redwoods League for decades has carried forward an action program, and in the process amassed hard-headed experience which will serve the interests of a great National Park of the Redwoods.

In Interior, we see Redwoods, a National Wild Rivers Bill, and programs for nationwide systems of trails and scenic parkways as practical conservation objectives in the second session of the 89th Congress.

We know the problems which beset us. But we see no diminution or tempering of the national interest in a quality environment.

We cannot be oblivious to the fact that our quest for a quality environment may be regarded as a competitor for needed dollars to meet our international
problems, in Viet Nam and elsewhere.

If this were the case, patriotism would demand that we defer; our survival comes first.

But our country is able as no other country is to protect and enhance our environment while meeting these other commitments. We believe with the British statesman that a country worth fighting for is worth building, and worth maintaining as a decent place to live.

We perhaps have not learned as much as we might about how much can be done with cooperating and understanding without costly programs. Mrs. Johnson has shown the way, encouraging the planting of flowers, the gifts of trees, the community pride which outpaces the costliest clean-up equipment in keeping a neighborhood or a street or a city lovely.

The Land and Water Conservation fund has given
needed stability to recreation planning—stability which brings efficiency and economy.

Users are cheerfully paying for services once impersonally assigned to general taxpayers, with a better feeling all round.

This is not to say that new programs will not be necessary, some costly. The whole field of water and air pollution will require capital commitments of a major order, governmentally and privately, and for a long time to overcome the accumulated deficit.

The encouraging thing is that as the pressures mount upon a country and its budget, the people rise to the challenge. State-by-state, or community-by-community jealousies give way to regional or basin approaches in water matters, for example.

In the Nation's own city, Washington, on the history-rich Potomac, we have an example of cooperation
at work which once would have seemed totally impossible. It was in the President's Natural Beauty Message that Secretary Udall was directed to work with federal, state, and local agencies, and citizens to make the Potomac "a model of scenic and recreational values" for the Nation.

All of you know how much it needed attention. Many of you know what a governmental thicket was involved. Representatives of four States and the District, of counties and municipalities, and of regional groups and other federal agencies miraculously have produced a Potomac Interim Report which is a classic of its kind.

This kind of action is under way here, too. The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the Lake Tahoe Joint Study Committee are equivalent operations with which this and other Departments are pleased to cooperate.

Congress last session created a new federal
department, one of great interest to all urban states. The Department of Housing and Urban Development is going to play a vital role in the subject of natural beauty, particularly in our cities. We look forward to a close working relationship.

What is at stake in all of this is our environment--air, water, land, structures, natural and artificial features. There is no definable proprietorship for our environment--we're all in it together.

Having a decent environment calls for improved planning, but the task is subject to no great master plan. It is subject to a great national attitude.

That attitude is positive, and seems destined to remain so. The people have joined up for the duration.

We in government--at whatever level--should recall the story of the French Revolutionary mob, storming through the streets, and the man who said "I must go
join them; I am their leader."

The greatest of natural resources is the will and willingness of the people to achieve a goal. Californians and all Americans want clean air, clean water, decent surroundings, a quality environment.

Governor Brown, on behalf of President Johnson and Secretary Udall, I congratulate you for helping the people of your state and of the country in this quest.