REMARKS OF UNDER SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR JOHN A. CARVER JR.
AT THE NATIONAL LIMESTONE INSTITUTE SAFETY AWARDS LUNCHEON,
WASHINGTON, D. C., JANUARY 17, 1966.

The great strides that have been made in science and technology, in communications, in industrial growth and general well-being of the average American have also been evident in the advances made in the techniques and procedures for safety.

These improvements in methodology have been accompanied by an increasingly conscious humanitarian concern on the part of management. With the realization of gains in efficiency, safety records have been advanced over the years throughout virtually all industry.

In Government, too, greater efforts have been recently extended to provide a safer working environment for employees, to seek out and correct unsafe
conditions, and practices as they develop, to educate and train workers in the essential principles of safety— all with a view to matching, if not exceeding, the best records of business and industry.

President Johnson has a goal, the so-called Mission 70, whereby by 1970 it is hoped the overall injury-frequency rate throughout the Government can be reduced by 30 percent. In his message to the executive branch, the President said: "The toll of injuries and the cost of accidents must be reduced again and again."

The problems that a Government Department, such as mine, faces in bettering its own safety record closely parallel those of industries such as your own. First, of course, we have our own employees engaged in almost limitless variety of vocations, ranging from clerks and others in relatively sedentary
occupations to those such as coal mine inspectors, 
game managers and heavy construction workers engaged 
in hazardous duties. While the general principles of 
safety apply to all of these vocations, various categories 
of work require special equipment, special training, 
special safeguards and extra special vigilance, and, 
of course, we are doing our best to fulfill these re-
quirements.

Secondly, the Department of the Interior, 
like any industrial concern that maintains and operates 
plants and offices in various sections of the country, 
must necessarily face safety problems that relate to the 
people in these areas. A Government plant that is a 
fire hazard is no less dangerous to a community than 
is a privately operated plant; an explosives testing 
station operated by the Government is no less forgiven 
for the noise it generates or the shock waves it may
send out than is a limestone quarry or other places where blasting occurs close to a community.

In still another way do the safety interests of this Department resemble those of private industry—and that is in those operations which provide services to the public, such as the transportation of people or the conduct of visitors through parks and recreation areas. The operation of the Alaska Railroad must be carried on with every bit as much concern for the safety of its passengers (as well as its workers) as is any railroad. In conducting visitors through the Washington Monument, or in providing camp facilities for tourists in the national parks, the recreation areas on Federal damsites and in the public lands, the responsibility for visitor safety is a heavy one.

But beyond all these involvements, the Interior Department has statutory responsibilities. Legislation
enacted by the Congress has given the Department of the Interior a mandatory responsibility for the safety of others. The Federal Coal Mine Safety Act, for example, imposes an obligation on the Department to inspect coal mines throughout the Nation, and to withdraw men and shut down larger mines in instances where imminent danger is thought to exist. These responsibilities are and have been undertaken with the utmost seriousness and care.

Those of us here today, whether from Government or industry, who have been intimately involved in this subject are aware of the fact that safety is a continuing fight. This is one of the most difficult aspects of the problem. To introduce safety, then to build up a respectable record—or even an outstanding one like those we celebrate today—and then to maintain this record at its peak or even to better it—there is
where the real challenge lies. Time and again, as you well know, companies have instituted safety pro-
grams with evangelical enthusiasm only to have these campaigns peter out and become dormant after a while.
I think we have all learned the lesson—if not from our own personal experience, then from observing what has happened to others.

Lesson one: Safety is not a one-time thing. It must be pursued with vigor, over and over and over. It must be approached again and again with new ideas, with fresh viewpoints, with new appeals, and with undiminished vigor.

Lesson two: Safety withers when it is delegated down the line. Unless top management takes a personal and enthusiastic interest in it--actually takes a hand in it--its effectiveness will decline. I venture to guess that in your industry as a whole, as in other
industries—the accident frequency rates and the accident severity rates are proportional to the personal devotion in time and money given to safety matters by top management.

Management must first of all provide the best physical conditions possible—safe tools and appliances, good housekeeping, protective clothing. Likewise, it must determine the best safety practices most suitable to the jobs being done and to establish firm, clear-cut, enforceable rules, and provide the necessary inspection and supervision to see that these rules are complied with. It must educate workers and supervisors in principles of safety and train their staffs in the applications of these principles—specific on-the-job safety training. And, finally, management must provide the continuing leadership and necessary follow-through. All of these facets of safety are known
to you, of course. So, I hope you will forgive me for repeating them. But I mention these simply to make the point that every award to be presented here today involved all of these many items and much more.

As I said in the beginning, advancing technology and improved communication methods have made the problems in safety easier to solve than in the past, but at the same time the engineering advances have also brought new problems. Larger and more complex machinery and equipment have introduced new hazards. This is what makes the job of personnel safety a continuing challenge—a challenge that your industry has obviously accepted.

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