

Statement by Senator Anderson on the Wilderness Bill (S. 174)

Some three dozen years ago a young forest supervisor in New Mexico enlisted me in the cause for wilderness preservation. That was Aldo Leopold, who became one of the eminent conservationists of our generation. As I have said before, I shall never forget how he poured out his heart on the subject of primitive tracts which seemed likely to be destroyed with the development of the auto, the truck, and speedier methods of transportation.

I talked with Aldo Leopold many times about wilderness, where it would be possible to preserve scenic beauty and the natural accompaniments of areas unspoiled by man-made changes, the fish and wildlife which had once owned these areas themselves, the forests and mesas, the canyons and open parks, the whole environment in which we ourselves can often feel most deeply refreshed, inspired in the scenes of our own distant beginnings.

The New Bill

Today I have the privilege of seeking to advance in a very significant way this cause of wilderness preservation, as I introduce for appropriate reference a bill to establish a national wilderness preservation system for the permanent good of the whole people, and for other purposes. This is the wilderness bill.

It is 5 years now since the distinguished and far-seeing Senator from Minnesota (Mr. Humphrey) first introduced such a measure to this body. Through two Congresses, our Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs has considered this proposed legislation. Extensive hearings have been held both in Washington, D.C., and in the field. Four volumes of printed testimony have been assembled. The constructive criticism of the executive agencies concerned with the lands involved has been received and studied. Objections of various groups have been met with revisions, eliminations of undesirable features, and the inclusion of various special provisions, to meet particular needs and to avoid the disruption of established practices or interference with private rights or with necessary developments in the public interest.

After 4 years of such constructive revision, and in response to an increasing public support and a deep sense of urgency in our realization that we must act promptly or run the risk of losing much of our opportunity, it seems to me that we should now proceed to act.

Accordingly, I have with great care prepared the new bill that I now introduce, a streamlined revision based on our committee's experience during the past two Congresses and on a comprehensive study of the requirements of such legislation and the best ways for meeting them with due regard for all the interests involved.

It is my purpose to do all that I can to advance this legislation, and I urge it upon the Senate at the beginning of this Congress as an outstanding opportunity to accomplish an enduring benefit in establishing a sound national policy and program for preserving a precious and significant resource of wilderness.

#### Reasons for Wilderness

There are profound and various reasons that give great importance to our concern with preserving areas of wilderness. These reasons are not solely concerned with our recreation, vital as this can be to the health of individuals or a nation. There also are educational and historical values, and it may be that the scientific values related to our human understanding of natural processes in relation to our own enterprise may prove to be the greatest of all.

#### Bench Marks

In the wilderness are the bench marks of reference for the civilization that we still are perfecting. Dr. Luna B. Leopold, Chief of the Water Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey, distinguished and worthy son of the pioneer conservationist Aldo Leopold, has recently emphasized these "bench mark" values of wilderness in connection with the question of falling water tables. Dr. Leopold points out that "the lack of a datum increases greatly the difficulty of appraising the volumes of water available, and the rates of recharge, and of understanding the implication of changes of water tables; further, it makes very difficult the prognosis of future status of an individual aquifer."

Thus one engineer and scientist stresses the reference values of areas of wilderness. "We take it for granted," says Luna Leopold, "that there is some social gain in the erection and maintenance of a museum of fine arts, a museum of natural history, or even a historical museum. Sooner or later we ought to be mature enough to extend this concept to another kind of museum, one of which you might call the museum of land types, consisting of samples as uninfluenced as possible by man."

#### For the Whole People

The comparison of wilderness areas to museums is a valid enlightening one in various ways. Not only does it illustrate Dr. Leopold's evaluation of wilderness for scientific reference purposes as well as for educational and recreational purposes, it also illustrates the fact that our areas of wilderness are for everyone, for the whole people, for anyone, not for a selected few. Like our museums and our art galleries, our wilderness areas may at any given time be visited by a relatively small percentage of our people, yet they are available to any who will use them, part of our cultural resource as well as our natural heritage. We should regard them as such and cherish them.

### Wilderness Recreation

Yet we must recognize and emphasize more than we have, the values of wilderness recreation in providing for the health and vigor of our citizens.

"Physical fitness is the basis of all the activities of our society," and I say this in the words of President-elect John F. Kennedy writing thus in last week's (December 26, 1960) issue of Sports Illustrated. In an article entitled "The Soft American," this great and vigorous leader warns that this "age of leisure and abundance can destroy vigor and muscle tone as effortlessly as it can gain time."

"Many of the routine physical activities which earlier Americans took for granted," he points out, "are no longer part of our daily life. A single look at the packed parking lot of the average high school will tell us what has happened to the traditional bike to school that helped to build young bodies. The television set, the movies, and the myriad conveniences and distractions of modern life all lure our young people away from the strenuous physical activity that is the basis of fitness in youth and in later life."

"Thus," declares our soon-to-be President, John F. Kennedy, "the physical fitness of our citizens is a vital prerequisite to America's realization of its full potential as a nation, and to the opportunity of each individual citizen to make full and fruitful use of his capacities."

The Honorable John P. Saylor, with whom I am pleased to be associated on the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, a recreation and wilderness champion in the House of Representatives, has made this same emphasis on physical fitness by quoting the Director of Selective Service, Maj. Gen. Lewis B. Hershey, as saying: "We are not inherently a nation of softies, but it is a harder fight for us to stay fit than for a lot of less privileged people."

"Our kids are all right," said General Hershey, "but autos, innerspring mattresses, and regulated heating make it tougher for us to stay fit." Mr. Saylor agreed with General Hershey's comment that "we've got to stay vigorous and still enjoy our luxury," and he added the suggestion that our wilderness areas give us a chance to develop physical fitness and adventurous habits of mind, as well as find relief for jaded minds, tense nerves, and soft muscles.

### Without Damaging Other Interests

It is not too late in our land-management history, Mr. President, to meet these needs for wilderness and realize its benefits without damaging other interests or requiring sacrifices. If we act promptly we can provide for a system of wilderness areas that will preserve this resource without taxing any other in any foreseeable future, and we can do this with the confidence that if our

successors ever do foresee such need they will find that we have saved for them the wilderness and have not needlessly destroyed it ourselves.

Our peculiar opportunity lies principally in the fact that within our national forests, national parks, refuges, ranges, and other areas dedicated to some kind of preservation purpose there are areas of wilderness that can be preserved as such without interference with the other purposes which the areas now serve. It is this opportunity that we propose to realize in establishing the policy and program of this wilderness bill.

#### Principles of the Bill

Recognizing "that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, is destined to occupy and modify all areas \* \* \* except those that are designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition," this bill declares a policy of securing "for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource."

For this purpose the bill would establish "a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally owned areas \* \* \* to be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness."

It is a key declaration of the measure, at the outset of its section on the use of wilderness, that "nothing in this act shall be interpreted as interfering with the purposes stated in the establishment of, or pertaining to, any park, monument, or other unit of the national park system, or any national forest, national wildlife refuge, or other area involved, except that any agency administering any area within the wilderness system shall be responsible for preserving the wilderness character of the area."

#### A Relatively Small Part of Our Land

The reasonableness of such a policy and program is further emphasized by an understanding of the relatively small part of our land area that is thus affected. All the lands that could possibly be now thus dedicated to wilderness use and protection--and they would be within already established national forests, refuges, parks or similar Federal areas--would make up only about one-fiftieth of our land.

Only about 5 percent of our Federal estate would be thus preserved, and for the most part it would be in the high country of the national forests, the back country of the national parks, in areas not now open to exploitation. Only by act of Congress would new

areas beyond those provided for in this act be established. At such little cost we can attain such great ends.

### The Sources of Our Spiritual Welfare

It is my purpose now to conclude these remarks with the observation that while we must deal here in the Congress with these matters as subjects of carefully designed programs and policies determined in the light of economic and other governmental realities, we should likewise recognize that we are dealing with the sources of our spiritual welfare also, with the esthetics of our common life, not with bread alone, but with our inheritance of a great outdoors resource.

For some 3 years now our Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission has been studying these resources and our needs. We are approaching the time of our recommendations. The enactment of this wilderness legislation will help this Commission in its work. It will provide procedures by which the recommendations of the Commission with reference to wilderness can effectively be carried out, and the existence of these procedures can indeed facilitate the very formulation of such recommendations.

This legislation will establish a policy and program regarding wilderness which will give shape and orderliness to the Outdoor Recreation Commission's considerations relating to wilderness. To all our concerns with the preservation of all the great values of wilderness the measure here presented will contribute the advantages of a carefully considered, sound, and enduring orderly policy and program--a practical way of dealing with both idealism and reality, which here come close together.

### We Have an Obligation

Six years ago last September it was my privilege to dedicate a memorial erected by The Wilderness Society in cooperation with the Forest Service in honor of my early mentor, Aldo Leopold, at a beautiful windswept New Mexico site "overlooking," in the words of the bronze tablet itself "overlooking the Gila Wilderness, which he helped establish--first national forest area so designated--dedicated as a tribute to him for the national wilderness preservation system he helped create." I said then:

"The work of Aldo Leopold has been done. We now become trustees of his inheritance. Those of us who may visit within the wilderness and who are able to rest and be restored in our peace of mind and body by the quiet that it will always possess have nonetheless an obligation to see that the work of one generation shall not be sacrificed by those that come after. We have an obligation to make sure that this area (and others like it) may remain untouched for generations and perhaps centuries to come. We cannot take our burdens

as trustees lightly if we are to keep faith with those who struggled so mightily to achieve these precious spots within the confines of a busy continent. The erection of this memorial--reminds each of us that our lives as well can contribute to the things that mean beauty for the eye and rest for the spirit. We, too, can preserve the wilderness."

These words of 6 years ago at a memorial for one of our pioneers I am glad today to recall and iterate with regard for all of those who through the years have contributed to the opportunity we now face and cherish. We can preserve wilderness, and I commend to you this wilderness bill as a sound, reasonable, considerate, but effective charter for doing so.

Mr. Anderson subsequently said: Mr. President, earlier I introduced a so-called wilderness bill. I find that the junior Senator from Washington (Mr. Jackson) desires to be a cosponsor of the bill; and there may be other cosponsors. I ask unanimous consent that the bill remain at the desk for 2 days, so that the names of additional sponsors may be added to the bill, if that is desired.

The Presiding Officer (Mr. Moss in the chair). Without objection, it is so ordered.

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