

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, MAY 14, 1970

Hickel Calls for a Revision of Priorities to Eliminate Destructive Excesses

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Special to The New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, May 13—

Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel said today that the nation would have to radically revise its priorities in the years ahead to emphasize livability and eliminate destructive luxuries.

Mr. Hickel told the American Society of Newspaper Editors that real progress had been impaired "by the advertisement of products not necessary for growth but just necessary to someone's economy."

"We must take stock of what the priorities are for man," Mr. Hickel said. "Our earth is endangered by man's environmental abuses. We must have the courage to set those priori-

ties not only in America but in the world so that most of our time, energy and money is spent on the living of life rather than on the destruction and the defense of life."

Confidence in Nixon

If environmental costs were considered in products, he continued, "we'd get away from a lot of things not necessary for progress."

"A \$100 suit from a mill that pollutes the air and water might be \$101 if the mill didn't do it," he said. "We've got to get away from presenting awards to companies that can just get things to the marketplace the cheapest way."

Referring to his recent letter to President Nixon urging a hearing for the views of young

people, Mr. Hickel remarked: "I was most grateful for the spirit in which the President received my views. I have the utmost confidence in his leadership."

"Some think the crisis is just on our campuses," he continued. "But let me ask: Are student demonstrations the disease, or are they the symptom?"

Mr. Hickel appeared before about 400 editors on an environmental panel on the second day of the society's three-day convention at the Hilton Hotel. Dr. Barry Commoner, a Washington University ecologist, told the gathering that he was "dismayed by the misunderstanding of the present situation on campuses." He added: "The present crisis over the

enlargement of the war in Southeast Asia is basically a massive protest of our youth against policies which have governed the course of American society for at least a generation."

"And this is equally true of the environmental crisis. In both cases, the youth are desperately trying to deliver the same message to us, their elders—our past is a fatal threat to their future."

Alternatives Are Grim

Dr. Commoner and David Brower, head of Friends of the Earth, said they were optimistic about the eventual solution of environmental problems.

"If you people continue doing the magnificent job you've done of getting the facts to the

public," Dr. Commoner told the newspaper editors, "I'm confident the public will take the actions necessary to survive."

Mr. Brower—introduced by the panel's chairman, John B. Oakes, editorial page editor of The New York Times, as "the single most effective conservation activist in the world today"—said that conditions "give us no more than 10 years to bring major changes in our politics and economics; but the alternatives are so grim we'll make those changes."

Considering long-term radiation hazards, he added, "the least we can do if morality is more than a gesture is to plan for a thousand years ahead to protect our progeny and assure that a decent life and beauty will endure."

Charles M. Heinen, chief emissions engineer for the Chrysler Corporation, engaged in a spirited exchange with J. Edward Murray, managing editor of the Arizona Republic, about whether the automobile industry had "hed" for 18 years about its fume-control efforts.

S. Smith Griswold, formerly in charge of Federal air pollution abatement, said that two decades of dealing with automobile smog had been "disillusioning, because the wealthiest and reputedly the most talented industry in the world has behaved so irresponsibly and engaged in so many diversionary and dilatory tactics."