

GOVERNMENT CONTROL NEEDED

CONSERVATION AN ISSUE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

COAL LANDS SHOULD BE LEASED

President Outlines His Policy Respecting Public Domain—Should Respect Power of States

ST. PAUL, Sept. 5.—In an address before the National Conservation congress now in session in St. Paul, Minn., President Taft yesterday discussed at length the public domain of the United States, going into the various phases of the question extensively. His address in part follows: Gentlemen of the National Conservation Congress—Conservation as an economic and political term has come to mean the preservation of our natural resources for economical use, so as to secure the greatest good to the greatest number. Today we desire to restrict and retain under public control the acquisition and use by the capitalists of our natural resources.

The danger to the state and to the people at large from the waste and dissipation of our national wealth is not one which quickly impresses itself on the people of the older communities, because its most obvious instances do not occur in their neighborhood, while in the newer part of the country the sympathy with expansion and development is so strong that the danger is scoffed at or ignored. Among scientific men and thoughtful observers, however, the danger has always been present; but it needed some one to bring home the crying need for a remedy of this evil so as to impress itself on the public mind and lead to the formation of public opinion and action by representatives of the people. Theodore Roosevelt took up this task in the last two years of his second administration, and well did he perform it.

As president of the United States I have, as it were, inherited this policy, and I rejoice in my heritage. I prize my high opportunity to do all that an executive can do to help a great people realize a great national ambition. For conservation is national. It affects every man of us, every woman, every child. What I can do in the cause I shall do, not as president of a party but as president of the whole people. Conservation is not a question of politics or of factions, or of persons. It is a question that affects the vital welfare of all of us—of our children and our children's children.

I shall divide my discussion under the heads of (1) agricultural lands; (2) mineral lands—that is, land containing metalliferous minerals; (3) forest lands; (4) coal lands; (5) oil and gas lands; and (6) phosphate lands.

I feel that it will conduce to a better understanding of the problems presented if I take up each class.

Agricultural Lands

There is no crying need for radical reform in the methods of disposing of what are really agricultural lands. The present laws have worked well. The enlarged homestead law has encouraged the successful farming of lands in the semi-arid regions.

Then conservation of agricultural lands is shown in the reclamation of arid lands by irrigation, and I should devote a few words to what the government has done and is doing in this regard.

Reclamation

By the reclamation act a fund has been created of the proceeds of the public lands of the United States with which to construct works for storing great bodies of water at proper altitudes, from which, by a suitable system of canals and ditches, the water is to be distributed over the arid and subarid lands of the government to be sold to settlers at a price sufficient to pay for the improvements. Primarily, the projects are and must be for the improvement of public lands. Incidentally, where private land is also within the reach of the water supply, the furnishing at cost or profit of this water to private owners by the government is held by the Federal Court of Appeals not to be a usurpation of power. But certainly this ought not to be done except from surplus water, not needed for government land.

The total sum already accumulated in the reclamation fund is \$60,273,253.22, and of that all but \$6,491,955.34 has been expended. It became very clear to congress at its last session, from the statements made by experts, that these projects could not be promptly completed with the balance remaining on hand or with funds likely to accrue in the near future. It was found, moreover, that

there are many settlers who have been led into taking up lands with the hope and understanding of having water furnished in a short time, who are left in a most distressing situation. I recommended to congress that authority be given to the secretary of the interior to issue bonds in anticipation of the assured earnings by the projects, so that the projects worthy and feasible might be promptly completed, and the settlers might be relieved from their present inconvenience and hardship. In authorizing the issue of these bonds congress limited the application of their proceeds to those projects which a board of army engineers to be appointed by the president should examine and determine to be feasible and worthy of completion. The board has been appointed and soon will make its report.

Suggestions have been made that the United States ought to aid in the drainage of swamp lands belonging to the states or private owners, because, if drained, they would be exceedingly valuable for agriculture and contribute to the general welfare by extending the area of cultivation. I deprecate the agitation in favor of such legislation. It is inviting the general government into contribution from its treasury toward enterprises that should be conducted either by private capital or at the instance of the state. In these days there is a disposition to look too much to the federal government for everything. I am liberal in the construction of the constitution with reference to federal power; but I am firmly convinced that the only safe course for us to pursue is to hold fast to the limitations of the constitution and to regard as sacred the powers of the states.

Mineral Lands

By mineral lands I mean those lands bearing metals, or what are called metalliferous minerals. The rules of ownership and disposition of these lands were first fixed by custom in the West, and then were embodied in the law, and they have worked, on the whole, so fairly well that I do not think it wise now to attempt to change or better them. The apex theory of tracing title to a lode has led to much litigation and dispute, and ought not to have become the law, but it is so fixed and understood now that the benefit to be gained by a change is altogether outweighed by the inconvenience that would attend the introduction of a new system. So, too, the proposal for the government to lease such mineral lands and deposits and to impose royalties might have been in the beginning a good thing, but now that most of the mineral land has been otherwise disposed of it would be hardly worth while to assume the embarrassment of a radical change.

Forest Lands

Nothing can be more important in the matter of conservation than the treatment of our forest lands. This was recognized by congress by an act authorizing the executive to reserve from entry and set aside public timber lands as national forests. Speaking generally, there has been reserved of the existing forests about 70 per cent of all the timber lands of the government.

We have, excluding Alaska forests, a total of about 144,000,000 acres of forests belonging to the government which is being treated in accord with the principles of scientific forestry. The law now prohibits the reservation of any more forest lands in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Colorado and Wyoming except by act of congress. I am informed by the department of agriculture that the government owns other tracts of timber lands in these states which should be included in the forest reserves. I expect to recommend to congress that the limitation herein imposed shall be repealed.

In the present forest reserves there are lands which are not properly forest land and which ought to be subject to homestead entry. This has caused some local irritation. We are carefully eliminating such lands from forest reserves or where their elimination is not practicable, listing them for entry under the forest homestead act. Congress ought to trust the executive to use the power of reservation only with respect to land covered by timber or which will be useful in the plan of reforestation.

Coal Lands

The next subject, and one most important for our consideration, is the disposition of the coal lands in the United States and in Alaska.

Under the laws providing for the disposition of coal lands, the minimum price at which lands are permitted to be sold is \$10 an acre; but the secretary of the interior has the power to fix a maximum price and to sell at that price. Under the new regulations, adopted April 10, 1909, the maximum price was increased to \$300 except in regions where there are large mines, where no maximum limit is fixed and the price is determined by the estimated tons of coal to the acre. The highest price fixed for any

land under this regulation has been \$608.

The question which remains to be considered is whether the existing law for the sale of soft coal in the ground should continue in force or be repealed and a new method of disposition adopted. Under the present law the absolute title in the coal beneath the surface passes to the grantee of the government. The price fixed is upon an estimated amount of the tons of coal per acre beneath the surface, and the prices are fixed so that the earnings will only be a reasonable profit upon the amount paid in and the investment necessary. But, of course this is more or less guesswork, and the government parts with the ownership of the coal in the ground.

If the government leases the coal lands and acts as any landlord would, and imposes conditions in its lease like those which are now imposed by the owners in fee of coal mines in the various coal regions of the East, then it would retain over the disposition of the coal deposits a choice as to the assignee of the lease, a power of resuming possession at the end of the term of lease, which might easily be framed to enable it to exercise a limited but effective control in the disposition and sale of the coal to the public. It has been urged that the leasing system has never been adopted in this country, and that its adoption would largely interfere with the investment of capital and the proper development and opening up of the coal resources. I venture to differ entirely from this view. My investigations show that many owners of mining property of this country do not mine it themselves, and do not invest their money in the plants necessary for the mining; but they lease their properties for a term of years varying from twenty to thirty and forty years, under conditions requiring the erection of a proper plant and the investment of a certain amount of money in the development of the mines, and fixing a rental and a royalty, sometimes an absolute figure and sometimes one proportioned to the market value of the coal. Under this latter method the owner of the mine shares in the prosperity of his lessees when coal is high and the profits good, and also shares to some extent in their disappointment when the price of coal falls.

I have looked with some care into a report made at the instance of President Roosevelt upon the disposition of coal lands in Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand. These are peculiarly mining countries, and their experience ought to be the most valuable. In all these countries the method for the disposition and opening of coal mines originally owned by the government is by granting leasehold, and not by granting an absolute title. The terms of the leases run all the way from twenty to fifty years, while the amount of land which may be leased to any individual there is from 320 acres to 2,000 acres. It appears that a full examination was made and the opinions of all the leading experts on the subject were solicited and given, and that with one accord they approved in all respects the leasing system. Its success is abundantly shown. It is possible that at first considerable latitude will have to be given to the executive in drafting these forms of lease, but as soon as experiment shall show which is the most workable and practicable its use should be provided for specifically by statute.

The change from the absolute grant to the leasing system will involve a good deal of trouble in the outset, and the training of experts in the matter of making proper leases; but the change will be a good one and can be made. The change is in the interest of conservation, and I am glad to approve it.

Alaska Coal Lands

The investigations of the geological survey show that the coal properties in Alaska cover about 1,200 square miles, and that there are known to be available about 15,000,000,000 tons.

In my judgment it is essential in the proper development of Alaska that these coal lands should be opened, and that the Pacific slope should be given the benefit of the comparatively cheap coal of fine quality which can be furnished at a reasonable price from these fields; but the public, through the government, ought certainly to retain a wise control and interest in these coal deposits, and I think it may do so safely if congress will authorize the granting of leases, as already suggested for government coal lands in the United States, with provisions forbidding the transfer of the leases except with the consent of the government, thus preventing their acquisition by a combination or monopoly and upon limitations as to the area to be included in any one lease to one individual and at a certain moderate rental, with royalties upon the coal mined proportioned to the market value of the coal either at Seattle or San Francisco.

Oil and Gas Lands

In the last administration there were withdrawn from agricultural

entry 2,820,000 acres of supposed oil land in California; about 1,500,000 acres in Louisiana, of which only 6,500 were known to be vacant unappropriated land; 75,000 acres in Oregon and 174,000 acres in Wyoming, making a total of nearly 4,000,000 acres.

The needed oil and gas law is essentially a leasing law. In their natural occurrence, oil and gas cannot be measured in terms of acres, like coal, and it follows that exclusive title to these products can normally be secured only after they reach the surface. Oil should be disposed of as a commodity in terms of barrels of transportable product rather than in acres of real estate. This is, of course, the reason for the practically universal adoption of the leasing system wherever oil land is in private ownership. The government thus would not be entering on an experiment, but simply putting into effect a plan successfully operated in private contracts. Why should not the government as a land owner deal directly with the oil producer rather than through the intervention of a middleman to whom the government gives title to the land?

The principal feature of such legislation should be the exercise of beneficial control rather than the collection of revenue.

Phosphate Lands

Phosphorus is one of the three essentials to plant growth, the other elements being nitrogen and potash. Of these three, phosphorus is by all odds the scarcest element in nature. It is easily extracted in useful form from the phosphate rock, and the United States contains the greatest known deposits of this rock in the world.

During this administration there has been withdrawn and classified 437,000 acres, so that today there is classified as phosphate-rock land 2,115,000 acres. This rock is most important in the composition of fertilizers to improve the soil, and as the future is certain to create an enormous demand throughout this country for fertilization, the value of the public of such deposits as these can hardly be exaggerated. Certainly with respect to these deposits a careful policy of conservation should be followed. Half of the phosphate of the rock that is mined in private fields in the United States is exported. As our farming methods grow better the demand for the phosphate will become greater, and it must be arranged so that the supply shall equal the needs of the country.

A law that would provide a leasing system for the phosphate deposits, together with a provision for the separation of the surface and mineral rights as is already provided for in the case of coal, would seem to meet the need of promoting the development of these deposits and their utilization in the agricultural lands of the West. If it is thought desirable to discourage the exportation of phosphate rock and the saving of it for our own lands, this purpose could be accomplished by conditions in the lease granted by the government to its lessees.

Water Power Sites

The subject is one that calls for new legislation. It has been thought that there was danger of combination to obtain possession of all the power sites and to unite them under one control. What ever the evidence of this, or lack of it, at present we have had enough experience to know that combination would be profitable, and the control of a great number of power sites would enable the holders or owners to raise the price of power at will within certain sections; and the temptation would promptly attract investors and the danger of monopoly would not be a remote one. However this may be, it is the plain duty of the government to see to it that in the utilization and development of all this immense amount of water power, conditions shall be imposed that will prevent monopoly, and will prevent extortionate charges, which are the accompaniment of monopoly.

It is contended that through its mere proprietary right in the site, the central government has no power to attempt to exercise police jurisdiction with reference to how the water power in a river owned and controlled by the state shall be used, and that it is a violation of the state's rights. I question the validity of this objection. The government may impose any conditions that it chooses in its lease of its own property, even though it may have the same purpose, and in effect accomplish just what the state would accomplish by the exercise of its sovereignty.

I beg of you, therefore, in your deliberations and in your informal discussions, when men come forward to suggest evils that the promotion of conservation is to remedy that you invite them to point out the specific evils and the specific remedies; that you invite them to come down to details in order that their discussions may flow into channels that shall be useful rather than into periods that shall be eloquent and entertaining, without shedding real light on the

subject. The people should be shown exactly what is needed in order that they make their representatives in congress and the state legislature do their intelligent bidding.

STATE GETS \$247,000 FROM BALDWIN ESTATE

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 2.—Following the completion of the appraisal of the estate of Elias J. (Lucky) Baldwin, it is announced that the state will receive from it the greatest inheritance tax ever paid into the treasury. The report of James H. Faulkner, special appraiser, has been filed in the probate court, and shows the estate to consist of \$11,138,272.61 in real estate and \$349,342.72 in personal property.

After deducting from this \$4,138,272.61, which is the amount of mortgage on the property, the total value of the estate is \$7,350,038.36.

Judge Rives has ordered the executor of the estate, H. A. Urub, to pay the state \$247,000 inheritance tax, which is said to be the largest tax of the kind by \$100,000 ever paid in California.

MIDLAND PEOPLE OBJECT TO THE S. P. DEPOT

Tell the State Railroad Commission That the \$410 Shed and Platform Will Not Do

SALEM, Sept. 1.—People of Midland, on the Southern Pacific, have protested to the state railroad commission to the railroad's plan to erect a platform and shed at that point for depot purposes, stating they desire facilities at least as good as those located at Dorris.

The Southern Pacific agreed to construct at a cost of \$410 a shed and platform, but Midland people state that nothing respectable may be con-

structed for that amount of money. They say that from December 18, 1909, to August 25, 1910, 140 cars of livestock and 11 cars of grain were shipped from that point, and during the coming fall and winter say that 200 cars more will be sent out. Further, they say that the people of Merrill are desirous of seeing a depot and freight house at Midland, as they claim it is five miles nearer to haul from Merrill to Midland than to Klamath Falls, and that the roads are much better.

GERMAN COUNT IS THROWN FROM HORSE AND KILLED

Lost His Money After he came Here and Worked as a Model in a Clothing Store

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 2.—Count August Schoffelsky de Mukadel de Castelane Seymour de Germany was thrown from a horse here this morning and his skull was fractured. He will die. He came to America some time ago, and lost all his money. He then worked as a model, displaying men's clothes in a retail establishment here.

BICYCLES

For an up-to-date wheel, get a Rambler, on sale at the GUN STORE. For sale or rent. Pents to rent. Guns. We carry a full line of Sporting Goods.

THE GUN STORE
J. B. CHAMBERS

MASON & SLOUGH ABSTRACTERS

A choice line of investments that will make the purchaser money
Lands
Ranches
City Property
Farm Mortgages
MASON & SLOUGH

BEST EQUIPPED HOTEL IN SOUTHERN OREGON

Lakeside Inn,

MRS. M. McMILLAN, Prop'r.

Modern improvements 73 rooms and suites.
Sample Rooms, Bar Room, Parlors, Two Club Rooms, Etc., Etc.

SPECIAL RESORT FOR TOURISTS

WANTED—A RIDER AGENT

Sample Line Model "Ranger" bicycle furnished by us. Our agents everywhere are making money fast. *Write for full particulars and special offer at once.*
NO MONEY REQUIRED until you receive and approve of your bicycle. We ship to anyone anywhere in the U. S. without a cent deposit in advance. *Free trial* and allow TEN DAYS' FREE TRIAL during which time you may return it for no reason at all to any part of the world. If you are then, not perfectly satisfied or if you wish to keep the bicycle, it is to be kept to us at our expense and you will not be out one cent.
FACTORY PRICES—we furnish the highest grade bicycles it is possible to make to the middlemen's profit by buying direct of us and have the manufacturer's guarantee on your bicycle. **DO NOT BUY** a bicycle of a pair of tires from anyone else. *Write for our catalogue and learn our unheard of factory prices and remarkable special offers to retail agents.*
YOU WILL BE ASTONISHED when you receive our beautiful catalogue and study our superb models at the *lowest* prices. We are satisfied with \$1.00 profit above factory cost. **DOUBLE CYCLE DEALERS**, you can sell our bicycles under your own name plate at our prices. Orders filled the day received.
We do not regularly handle second hand bicycles, but usually have a number on hand taken in trade by our Chicago retail stores. These we sell out promptly at prices ranging from \$3 to \$5 or \$10. Descriptive bargain lists mailed free. Single wheels, imported rubber chains and pedals, parts, repairs and equipment of all kinds at *half* the usual retail prices.

\$8.50 HEDGETHORN PUNCTURE-PROOF \$4.80 SELF-HEALING TIRES A SAMPLE PAIR TO INTRODUCE, ONLY

The regular retail price of these tires is \$1.50 per pair, but to introduce we will sell you a sample pair for \$1.50 cash with order \$1.55.

NO MORE TROUBLE FROM PUNCTURES

NAILS, Tacks or Glass will not let the air out. Sixty thousand pairs sold last year. Over two hundred thousand pairs now in use.

DESCRIPTION: Made in all sizes. Lightly and easily riding, very durable lined inside with a special quality of rubber, which never becomes porous and which closes up small punctures without allowing the air to escape. We have hundreds of letters from satisfied customers stating that their tires have only been pumped up once or twice in a whole season. They weigh no more than an ordinary tire, the puncture resisting qualities being given by several layers of this specially prepared fabric on the inside.

The regular price of these tires is \$1.50 per pair, but for advertising purposes we are making a special factory price to the rider of only \$1.50 per pair. All orders shipped same day letter is received. We ship C. O. D. on approval. You do not pay a cent until you have examined and found them strictly as represented.

We will allow a cash discount of 5 per cent (thereby making the price \$1.42 per pair) if you send FULL CASH WITH ORDER and enclose this advertisement. For any reason you risk in sending us an order at the tires may be returned at our expense if for any reason they are not satisfactory on examination. We are perfectly reliable and money sent to us is as safe as in a bank. If you order a pair of these tires, you will find that they will ride easier, run faster, wear better, last longer and look finer than any tire you have ever used or seen at any price. We know that you will be so well pleased that when you want a bicycle you will give us your order. We want you to send us a trial order at once, hence this remarkable price offer.

IF YOU NEED TIRES don't buy any kind at any price until you send for a pair of the special introductory price quoted above; or write for our big TIRE and SADDLE CATALOGUE which describes and quotes all makes and kinds of tires at about half the usual prices.

DO NOT WAIT but write us a postal today. **DO NOT THINK** of trying a bicycle until you have our tires. It only costs a postal to learn everything. Write it NOW.

J. L. MEAD CYCLE COMPANY, CHICAGO, ILL.