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FILE REFERENCE:

December 27, 1941

TO DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL:

The close of this year finds our nation with war thrust upon it. We have not escaped effects of similar strife in Europe and other parts of the world, but now we are face to face with its reality at our own outposts and even threatening our shores.

Up to the moment we have been most fortunate to live in a country where it was still possible to proceed in the formulation and completion of programs for conserving our natural resources. Certain modifications have already been necessary to meet new conditions which have arisen in the preparation for national defense, but through close cooperation of departmental personnel, adaptations have been made readily with the result that a most satisfactory record of achievement has been attained in spite of adjustments.

But now it is no longer preparation for defense--it is defense! and we all wonder how best we can serve in this fight to preserve our liberties and ideals. Some of us will be called for combatant service, but others will have to carry on at home.

We have a vastly different trust laid upon us than many other government agencies or private industries. Defense is our first concern because if we were not victorious, future Americans would have little to enjoy in resources conserved for them, had they not their traditional freedom at the same time. But in addition to all-out defense we have a responsibility to keep our work going. The struggle for natural resources has been the cause for wars often, but paradoxically enough natural resources also provide the means of recovery after the war.

Some of our work may have to be postponed or even eliminated and conditions will undoubtedly tax our resourcefulness to the utmost; we may be forced to concentrate on the basic principles of conservation for these trying years, but let us hold on to them, let us keep the faith, knowing that a relaxation of a vital conservation program would

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mean not only a waste of the great achievements thus far, setting us back ten, twenty years, or even more years, but in the post war period we will find that these natural resources will be our strength and through them will come our recovery.

Ours is the service of having vision, of being sane, and thoroughly convinced that patriotism also means preparing for the reconstruction of our nation and we must never in a war hysteria lose sight of the great task we have to perform. To defend and to serve as best we can - we will not fail.

Sincerely yours,

  
H. W. MacKenzie  
Conservation Director