

"LAW ENFORCEMENT NECESSARY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF OUR WILDLIFE RESOURCES"

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As a result of man's ingenuity and because of today's automation, he has more and more leisure time. With this additional free time, where does man choose to invest it? Perhaps it is an inborn trait of nature, but just as our forefathers did, we love the outdoors. This is, without a doubt, the place where Americans today find relaxation and escape.

With more leisure time being spent out-of-doors, more pressure, more demands are constantly being made on our wildlife resources. As time invariably changes so many things, this leisure time has made no exception in the duties and job requirements of today's wildlife enforcement agent.

Our enforcement man of today must be armed with more than his badge of authority. He must have full knowledge of his duties, laws, and regulations. This man must also possess many virtues. Among them must be pride, love of his work, dedication, self-discipline, and certainly this man of enforcement—to insure success—must have enthusiasm. Ralph Waldo Emerson tells us "Enthusiasm is one of the most powerful engines of success, when you do a thing, do it with your might, put your whole soul into it. Stamp it with your own personality. Be active, be energetic, be enthusiastic, and faithful and you will accomplish your object. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."—So let us generate these qualities of high merit, not only in our personal life—but also let them be utilized in enforcement—that we may more ably protect and promote the wealth of wildlife resources of all America.

During my experience in law enforcement, I have always maintained that we were an agency completely independent, self-sustaining, able to stand alone handling our own affairs; however, this is only partially true, for we are akin, or closely related to the faculties of information and education. After all methods have failed to educate the would be game violator, as to the necessities of conservation, law enforcement yet has another chance. When the game violator is caught in his contemptuous act, and we place him behind bars, or, cause him to spend a night in jail, or as the result of a stiff fine, make him reach down deep in his pocketbook—then perhaps law enforcement has informed and educated with a lasting effect. Education, with all its facets, is a tool on which enforcement must heavily rely. We must always be willing to accept an invitation to meet with sport clubs, church groups, and civic organizations acquainting them with the important role of law enforcement necessary for conservation.

Two descriptive words of the English language which are most often mis-used are Christian, and sportsman. The dictionary gives this report of a sportsman—one who engages in sports—especially hunting and fishing, one who exhibits qualities, such as fairness, self control, one who is honorable. Now I ask you, how many sportsmen do you know, who would voluntarily walk off from a dove shoot after he had killed the day's limit—while numerous birds continue to come in at gun shot range? I'm sure there are many, but let me emphasize at this point, that I feel sure and confident that the ever imposing threat of our enforcement agents suddenly appearing of the scene of action greatly contribute to this fine exhibition of honor, fairness and self control.

Law enforcement of our wildlife laws aids in maintaining a balance of nature by insuring that a plentiful supply of parent animals

are left on hand at the close of each season; in order that the cycle of breeding and reproduction are completed.

I'm sure all of you are well acquainted with the tragic story of the Wild Passenger Pigeon. It took only 50 years for the people of this land to completely exterminate 5 billion of these birds. The Passenger Pigeon cannot be resurrected; this species has been slaughtered into the eternal black night of extinction. By 1889, only 551 buffalo could be found alive in the United States, sixty million of these animals had been done away with in less than a hundred years. This senseless massacre is a sin and a shame on the record of humanity; but this record, let it also show, and be held as evidence; what can happen to the wildlife of this country; without enforcement.

Everything was abundant, when the white man first stepped upon the shores of America, it was clean and uncluttered, but it didn't stay that way long; we have destroyed much of the forest, drained her marshes, leveled her hills, polluted the streams, and killed her creatures, and shown nothing but ingratitude for these things given to us free of charge on this good earth.

The astronauts of Apollo 9 read to us from the Book of Genesis, as they circled the moon; and as they looked down at this world, they referred to it as the "Good Earth"—and certainly there is beauty in the sound of the words "Good Earth"—it suggests to us a picture of all the forces and elements of nature working in harmony. Nature is indeed a thing of beauty; but it's more than that; it is an active purposeful co-ordinated machine. Each part is dependent upon another; all are related to make up this environment of man—our forests, grasslands, soil, water, and animal life—without one of these, this earth will die, and will become as dead as the moon. This is provable beyond questioning—parts of this earth once living and productive have now died, and it died at the hands of man; we of enforcement must work long and hard to protect, to help maintain this co-ordinated machine of nature. When we see and witness the wanton waste of our land and wildlife, let us recall the words of John Milton, "Accuse not nature, she hath done her part; do thou but thine."

At this point, I would like to call your attention to the 3rd Chapter of Ecclesiastes; and the very beautiful story of time, verses 1-8 tell us there is a time for all things—yes to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven; and with this thought, I say to you, my colleagues and associates of this 23rd Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Game and Fish Commissioners—that this is now the time—the season is late—but there is yet time for all the people of this land to join hands with law enforcement, in keeping America beautiful, green and productive; and this is the time for all of us to *determine* that we *will* keep our streams clear and clean, free from pollution, and fit for human use. And this is the time, that we *must* teach ourselves and our children to have respect for this *GOOD EARTH* and all its greatness, and if we'll do these things it will not only be good for us of today, but it will be good for all the millions who have not yet been born.

Today, I've mentioned the problems of our land. Waste of our wildlife, pollution of our streams. We've got problems in law enforcement, problems in our government—but I say to you today there is an answer to all these problems—and the answer to these situations seems to be one of the most difficult aspects in the conduct of human life—and that is precisely the application of *COMMON SENSE* to every situation; so in conclusion let me say *COMMON SENSE* is the greatest virtue of our law. Moreover, "*COMMON SENSE*" is the greatest virtue of our law enforcement agents.