REMARKS OF KARL S. LANDSTRCM, DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, TO BUREAU EMPLOYEES AT SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, JANUARY 26, 1961

We have a new President in Washington, a new Secretary of the Interior, a new Assistant Secretary for public land management, and in a few days I will have the honor and the challenge of being the new Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

Together we will face many old problems and many new issues, as we work toward our public land management goals.

I bring you greetings from Secretary Stewart L. Udall and from Assistant Secretary John A. Carver, Jr. I know both men well, and I know they share my own interest and yours in the Bureau of Land Management and in the lands and resources in our trust.

Secretary Udall brings with him a deep understanding of the West, combined with thorough appreciation of the Department's role in the economy and life of the whole Nation. Under his leadership the Department's programs and policies will reflect not merely the interests of a single State or region, but the national character of the Department's responsibilities. I share that point of view—for the public lands and resources are truly a national asset.

Secretary Udall was born in St. Johns, Arizona, a town founded by his grandfather David King Udall, in 1880. I like to think that I have this sort of background in common with the Secretary, since in 1848 my great grandfather, Jeremiah Halston, took out a land claim and founded Lebanon, Oregon, the town in which I was born.

First, let me congratulate Director Edward Wooley on his new position with the legislative branch of the Government. I know he will be adding another period of fine public service to his already long record of accomplishments.

For a few minutes let's take a broad look at some of the developments on the horizon and at a few of the issues we will be tackling.

Employees of the Bureau of Land Management need not be persuaded of the growing importance of lands and resources managed by the Bureau. The new Administration shares your point of view. Only through new vigor can we assure the continued conservation and development of the Nation's resource base.
Immediate forward steps are needed to conserve and develop renewable resources.

Last week President Kennedy's natural resources advisory committee asserted that "vigorous new leadership is essential to conserve our renewable resources of water, soil and forests and that full development of these resources is necessary to make possible the growth of our economy essential to America's role in the free world."

The committee said that existing Departments can do the necessary work but noted that better arrangements should be made to coordinate the programs from the Office of the President. Steps to protect wilderness values were recommended, and the possibility of using youth in conservation work was explored. The committee also asked for increased attention to forestry--on both private and public land--in helping to strengthen the economy.

The importance of natural resource projects--including conservation and recreation facilities--as a useful economic tool were also stressed in a special task force report on the American economy by Dr. Paul A. Samuelson of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Such projects not only assist economic recovery and growth, but also provide needed facilities.

A task force report on economically depressed areas prepared by Senator Paul A. Douglas of Illinois and others also emphasizes the importance of natural resource development programs. The Douglas report calls for additional public work projects, including construction of recreation facilities. It recommends development of parks and forests in depressed areas, research for new uses of minerals, and the creation of a youth conservation corps.

These reports and observations affect many departments and bureaus. They deserve special attention in the Bureau of Land Management. They are a clear indication of the importance which the new Administration puts on natural resource programs. We in the Bureau of Land Management can count on understanding, active support, and vigorous leadership.

A few days ago a Washington, D. C., newspaper noted that the Department of the Interior's responsibilities covered a broad range including "such mundane things as land management." Though BLM necessarily deals with things of an earthly nature, the decisions and policies of the Bureau represent as well, major economic and social judgments with important influence on many facets of life. But there are many who do not have an understanding of the place of BLM lands in the Nation's resource picture. Some current problems stem from such misunderstandings.

It has been said that the "public domain" consists of land which belongs to the Federal Government but which has not been withdrawn for a specific purpose and awaits transfer to a more specific form or to a specific Federal purpose. This statement from a book, "Politics and Grass," published last year by the University of Washington Press, reflects an all-too common thinking about the lands administered by BLM.

Time and again public land applicants assert their belief that BLM lands are open and immediately available for entry under the homestead laws and certain other laws. They assume that the lands are not withdrawn or reserved.
Actually, the so-called "unreserved public lands" in the Western States are not "unreserved" at all. This is a basic fact that is all-too-often overlooked, especially by so-called land locators who sell their services to prospective applicants.

The fact is that all BLM lands in the West, if they are not permanently withdrawn for a particular use or purpose, are temporarily withdrawn from entry, and have been since 1934. When a land application is filed it has the effect of a petition asking that the land be opened to entry. Users of the same land may ask at the same time that the land be retained under multiple-use management. The longer range interest of the public at large must be considered. If the land is not classified and opened it remains reserved for conservation of natural resources.

As a matter of orderly land use, decisions on land applications by the Bureau are often of critical importance. Here is an illustration. In the Burley, Idaho, grazing district, if a group of desert land applications had been allowed, abandonment of more than 20,000 acres of successfully seeded semi-desert range would have been necessary. Such abandonment would cause reduction of grazing by about one-half in three grazing units. Involved were more than 70 cattle and sheep operators who, with their predecessors, had depended on the Federal range for decades.

Perhaps a new approach is needed to the subject of land applications and resource-use decisions. Such an approach might well take note of the multiple-uses and values of BLM lands. It might well take account of the fact that the "unreserved public domain" is really a great "National Land Reserve"—from which future needs can be supplied as lands reach their highest use in a growing population.

In the book "Politics and Grass," to which I referred earlier, considerable attention is given to the record of F. R. Carpenter, the first Director of the Division of Grazing in the Department of the Interior. Mr. Carpenter wrote that when he entered office he had determined to have certain rules in the Grazing Service. One of these was "not to have the range ruled by a case-hardened bureaucracy." Another of his rules was "to keep the service civil and cooperative, but with a firm hold on all final decisions and an eye to the long-range policy." Mr. Carpenter had an understanding of the often difficult role of the public servant in serving the Nation while at the same time caring for the rights and privileges of the individual.

President Kennedy recently listed four attributes of public servants: First, courage, to stand up, even, if necessary, against one's associates; second, judgment, of our own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others; third, integrity, keeping in mind a public trust; and, fourth, dedication to the welfare of the public.

In the weeks and months ahead BLM will face old problems and new issues. We will face them squarely and with determination. By hard work—and I pledge you my own—the Bureau of Land Management will move forward with new vigor and a new dedication. As President Kennedy said in his inaugural address..."Ask not what your country will do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

I am sure that all employees of the Bureau of Land Management will join me in this great work.