

Calvin Coolidge Says:

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NORTHAMPTON, Mass., April 11.—Almost from the inception of the national government the disposal of the public lands has been a live issue. Most of the good tillage land on the Great Plains has been sold, but there remain large tracts suitable for pasturage and others covered with timber and holding deposits of oil, coal and metals.

These lands belong to the nation. The states of the Atlantic seaboard have the same property rights in them as the Rocky Mountain region. But under present laws the revenue from their sale goes mostly for the benefit of the states where they are located. If these states would take over both the land and irrigation projects, it would not be a bad trade for the nation.

But the national policy of conservation is involved. These resources ought to be used for the public benefit, and no guaranty has ever been devised to prevent states from turning them over to private and probably selfish speculation and exploitation. With proper restrictions against such action and reserves for national defense a feasible plan for state ownership could be developed. At least, the rather unjustifiable complaint that government lands pay no taxes and retard progress would be stilled.

CALVIN COOLIDGE