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A special three-day Polar Plan Conference on Arctic problems ended today with direction from Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel that future plans for the area should be viewed from an international standpoint.

"Knowledge of the world's polar regions will change not only the countries bordering on the Arctic -- it will change economic, social and cultural conditions throughout the world," Secretary Hickel said.

"I urge you to think of the Arctic as a single entity, so that all nations can contribute to its conservation and the wise use of its resources," he said.

"The North Country is beginning to undergo the most rapid and profound changes ever seen in any wilderness region in world history," Secretary Hickel said in addressing delegates to the conference. "It is unlike any other region in the world in many other ways.

"All of us -- throughout the world -- who work with the Arctic must find new ways to meet this unprecedented challenge. We need new ideas, new techniques and attitudes, perhaps even new institutions, and we need them in every nation involved in the Arctic."

The Secretary noted with satisfaction that the Canadian and Norwegian Governments had sent high officials to the Polar Plan Conference, He urged that other nations join in future efforts to coordinate Arctic planning and development.

The Conference, held at Skyland Lodge in Shenandoah National Park, brought together 100 representatives of industry, science, conservation and several levels of government to exchange ideas about the North's spectacular boom and its impact.

Secretary Hickel urged that Alaska's native Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts be given every opportunity to take part in decisions involving the Arctic and the work now being undertaken by industry and government in that State.

Unlike most other workers, he noted, Alaska Natives are accustomed to the land and its climate. Their rate of turnover on the job can be expected to remain low, he said, and their keen personal interest in preserving their environment makes them most likely to respect it and work in harmony with it as much as possible.

Human values must be given paramount attention, he emphasized, and all developmental problems must be considered in terms of their effects on people.