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Hickel Again Puts His Worst Foot Forward

(The Courier Journal)

WHATEVER CAN BE SAID for Interior Secretary Walter Hickel (and it isn't getting any easier to find things to say for him), it must be pointed out that he is not a man to truckle to public opinion. Neither is he unduly influenced by the rules of suspicion-conservation that normally guide his department. If his appointment of Lamm-Watt is any indication.

Indeed, unless one assumes that Mr. Hickel is intentionally trying to antagonize his critics and worry the public, the naturally conservation official is not at ease that he understand. He must be aware that the country's environmentalists are restless watching the slow pace of the effort to control pollution, the industrial revolution has begun to be reversed, the air and water are still seems unduly sensitive to the needs of the oil industry and its officials are still quoting geologists who argue that the blow-out could have occurred no matter what precautions had been taken. If this is so, a good argument can be made for closing down all offshore drilling until further and possibly that future leaks have been prevented.

And now Mr. Hickel has hired as a consultant and adviser James Lamm Watt who, according to a lobbyist for the oil industry, is immune in its interests. Mr. Lamm-Watt's principal