



Explanatory note about these document fragments

After Earth Day 1970 was over, the non-profit group Environmental Teach-In, Inc. was dissolved. Its chief organizer, Denis Hayes, and others went on to form Earth Action, an environmental political activist group.

Page 1 is a note from Nelson staffer Bill Cherkasky to fellow staffer John Heritage letting him know that Denis Hayes was seeking Nelson's help in repercussions from Earth Action's 1970 attack on legislators with particularly poor environmental records, the so-called "Dirty Dozen."

Page 2 is an excerpt from a letter sent to Hayes by a legislator who was criticized by Earth Action. The legislator was a 'runner-up' to the Dirty Dozen list. The outraged congressman quotes comments by Earth Day co-chair Robert McCloskey who down-played the link between the Earth Action group and Earth Day as coordinated by the former non-profit with Nelson's office.

M E M O

From: Bill Cherkasky

John:

Dennis Hayes is asking that Nelson release a statement supporting some of the action of the Env Action groups and counterweighing some of the damage done by McCloskey's statement.

Some brickbats are being thrown their way, which they think are unfair.

Attached sheets indicate the need for Nelson action, they say.

It is late, of course.

*called
Monday*



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Letter to Mr. Hayes



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September 24, 1970

- 4 -

Fortunately, concerned environmentalists such as Congressman Paul McCloskey recognize the potential threat your imprudent, uninformed accusations pose to the total environmental effort, and he has officially disassociated himself with your cause. I quote from a letter he sent to me on September 10, 1970:

"I have just learned of the press release and political action against you by an organization called 'Environmental Action, Inc.' This organization has no relationship whatsoever to the organization which sponsored Earth Day last spring, and for which Senator Gaylord Nelson and I were cochairmen. The Earth Day effort was operated by a nonprofit corporation, Environmental Teach-In, Inc., specifically formed for the Earth Day activities and subsequently inactivated.

"Neither Senator Nelson nor I have had any relationship with the group which has come out against you.

"If you feel it would be helpful, I will be glad to hold an appropriate press conference or issue an appropriate press release disavowing any connection between Earth Day and Environmental Action, Inc., and further expressing affirmative support for your own conservation record in the House during this past year.

"I would also be glad to write a letter to any newspaper in your district which you feel would correct any erroneous information which has already been published. Please let me know your desires, and any suggestions you may have on specific action I can take to be of help."

Finally, you express concern about my interest in "Environmental Resources, Inc." Yet, you were totally unconcerned when you distorted my voting record and challenged 20 years of leadership, service and dedication to my district, my State and my country. But, when I review material given by a staff member of Environmental Resources, Inc. (letter of agreement between Environmental Action and Environmental Resources, Inc., attached), it appears on the face of it that there is an intimate connection between that organization and yours. Environmental Resources, Inc., pays 70% of the rent for the office space you share in

McCloskey
W. F. Nicholson