

p. 3 Senator G. Nelson

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COUNCIL
FOR A
LIVABLE

**pollution
problems**

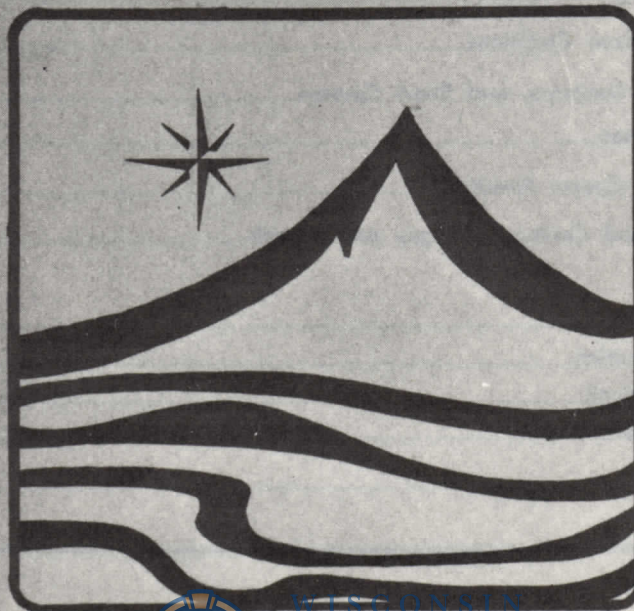
January 26 – 30, 1970

Biology Department

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PLAN FOR "E" DAY!

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

"A great deal of national attention has been focused on the need for the academic community to provide leadership in achieving and maintaining environmental quality." From our vantage point, not too far from Capitol Hill, the preceding sentence may be recorded as the understatement of this new year. But what are the needs? And how do we, the members of the academic community charged with a concern for undergraduate education, provide the leadership? Happily, answers to these two questions are emerging from the biological community itself. This special issue of CUEBS NEWS, built on that emergent response, has a threefold purpose:

- 1) To call attention to the Environmental Teach-In as a unique opportunity to educate;
- 2) To indicate how various communities are responding to student concern about environmental quality (in advance of the Teach-In);
- 3) To issue a call for our readers to share with the larger

biological community their responses, plans, and experiences in directing student concern toward action.

The October, 1969 CUEBS NEWS contained a special announcement of a symposium on "Undergraduate Studies in Environmental Science" scheduled for the AAAS Meetings in Boston; the February, 1970 CUEBS NEWS carried an editorial comment on the program which was under the direction of Everett M. Hafner, Dean, School of Natural Science and Mathematics, Hampshire College. The symposium generated a mountain of correspondence relative to undergraduate programs that focus on the environment. Proceedings of this symposium, consisting of the correspondence received, a resume of the meeting and of the papers delivered by principal speakers, will be published later this year. Thanks to Dr. Hafner, the content of this present special issue draws heavily on these symposium materials, supplemented with other sources of information available through various activities of CUEBS. We are particularly grateful for the special contribution by Senator Gaylord Nelson.

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A CRY AND A CALL: MAKE THE PROBLEMS OF ACHIEVING AND MAINTAINING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACADEMIC PROBLEMS

As teachers of undergraduates, there are few among us unaware of the importance many students place on the problems of environmental deterioration. Those who have asked students to verbalize their concern will find the comments that follow ring with familiarity:

* * *

I find myself angered by how eventually Lake Michigan, as well as the others, are now and will be getting green and soupy.

* * *

I only wish that my outlook toward nature in America would be comparable to Ralph Waldo Emerson's, who in 1836, wrote:

"... the reflection of trees and flowers in the glassy lakes; the musical, steaming, odorous south wind, which converts all trees to wind harps; . . . In every landscape, the point of astonishment is the meeting of the sky and the earth. . . ."

Instead I see America in a different light than Emerson. Yes, the trees and flowers still remain, but their reflections cannot be seen in muddy waters. The south wind is still odorous, but the odor is now putrid; and the sky still touches the earth, although sometimes we cannot see the sky.

* * *

"Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink." Is this merely a line from one of Coleridge's poems, or is it a future harsh reality? I believe the latter to be true.

. . . breathing air in Chicago is tantamount to being a heavy cigarette smoker. Given a choice of either smoking or breathing Chicago's air, I would choose cigarette smoking. I could save up enough premium coupons in a relatively short period of time and trade them in for a heart-lung machine. . . . Need I say what this does for our cities, states, and indeed for the pride of America as her children sing "Oh say can you see, through the smoke any light?"

* * *

Our carelessness could cause a major change in the web of our ecosystem which could result in our ultimate doom.

* * *

Although our students' cries about the state of the environment contain elements of elegance and humor, they often provide minimal leads to ways of translating such concerns into sound educational programs. A flow of oration on the quality of the environment has issued forth from many members of government recently; perhaps a clearer focus on the need to make the problems of achieving and maintaining environmental quality a part of undergraduate education can be gained by listening to some of those in government positions:

There is no question but that college students should be given the opportunity at the undergraduate level to learn to think clearly and intelligently of the nature, scope, and implication of today's environmental problems.—T. F. McLintock, Forest Service, Dept. of Agriculture, 10 Sept. 1969.

* * *

The subject—undergraduate education in environmental science—is one that interests me greatly. We have obtained such an enormous technological capacity that we run the real risk of destroying our environment. The immediate problem ahead of us is that of learning to control our technology. Man must learn to live with nature. You are right in thinking that we should address the attention of undergraduates to the problem. It will be their world.—Edith Green, Oregon, House of Representatives, 30 Oct. 1969.

* * *

The magnitude of our ecological blunders is becoming more evident every day, and the Nation as a whole understands what is happening. The people have now come to realize how widely our national resources are deteriorating—how massive is the debasement of the air we breathe and the water we drink. People are aware of the looming water shortages in some areas, and they recognize that our farmlands are being eaten up with urban sprawl and that we are running out of outdoor recreation space and that our soil is being depleted.

It is most important that our college students realize what is happening, and become fully informed on what can and must be done to reverse the present trend.—Frank Moss Utah, U. S. Senate, 18 Aug. 1969.

* * *

I welcome efforts in having the topic of environmental deterioration accepted as part of the educational program for undergraduate students. The problems we face in keeping the human environment fit for human use are real and growing and are not problems of just short-term interest. Solutions will require deep thought and a commitment of resources, both human and material, on the national and international level on a continuing basis. Today's socially concerned undergraduates will find plenty of outlet for their energies and idealism in this endeavor.—Patrick Mulloy, Dept. of State, 29 Oct. 1969.

* * *

There is a great opportunity to satisfy the rising demand of young people for "involvement" in various issues, by undertaking new academic programs at the undergraduate level, which include student participation investigations, and program-type activities which might normally have been conducted at the graduate level. This is a matter which requires much greater study and exploration.—Alvin Meyer, Jr., Environmental Health Services, 20 Oct. 1969.



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TEACH-IN



Senator Gaylord Nelson

As the Apollo 12 astronauts rocketed back from their sojourn on the moon, they were enthralled by the beauty of the earth, spinning thousands of miles below them, an orb of color on a background of black.

In all the vast universe, as far as man's knowledge has taken him, that one whirling orb is the only place capable of sustaining life.

Yet the quality of life on earth has declined alarmingly in the past few years because man has not cleaned up after himself.

Today, it can be said that there is no clean air left in the United States. The last vestige of pure air was near Flagstaff, Arizona, but it disappeared 6 years ago.

Today, it can also be said that there is no river or lake in the country that has not been affected by the pervasive wastes of our society.

Tomorrow? It has been predicted by responsible scientists that, in the 1980's, persons in some areas will have to wear breathing helmets to survive outdoors on heavy pollution days.

Americans must act now to avert that future. To that end, I offered to the Senate in January an agenda for the 1970's which outlines steps we must take if we are to preserve a better future.

The proposed agenda includes:

- Adoption of a constitutional amendment "which will recognize and protect the inalienable rights of every person to a decent environment."
- Acting immediately by moving against the heaviest polluters by phasing out the internal combustion automobile engine by January 1, 1978; eliminating persistent, toxic pesticides by 1972; adopting anti-pollution standards for detergents; reducing jet aircraft pollution; and eliminating nonreturnable bottles, jars, and cans by the development of reusable or degradable containers.
- Establish and protect the right of every citizen to plan his family and make funds available for research into population problems and provide family planning services.
- Creation of a citizen environmental advocate agency to involve citizens in environmental decision-making and creation of an environmental overview committee in Congress.

- Establishing an environmental education program that will make the environment and man's relationship to it the major subject at every level of public education.

- Setting up a national policy on land use to stop chaotic and unplanned urban sprawl.

- Establishing a national minerals and resources policy.

- Setting a national air and water quality policy by closing the environmental money gap by giving full funding to present pollution control programs.

- Launching a broad-scale effort to halt sea pollution by forbidding municipalities and industries to dump waste into the ocean and declaring a moratorium on new leases or permits for all production and other activities on the undersea outer continental shelf until criteria are established for its protection.

It is frightening to consider that today's children are growing up in a world that is rapidly losing the natural resources that make life worthwhile. Youth is aware that their children will be facing a bleak future if we continue the way we have.

Because of that concern, I organized a national Teach-In on the Crisis of the Environment to take place on April 22 on college campuses all across the country.

The teach-in will be a day when normal activities are set aside to devote the time for environmentalists, conservationists, students, political and community leaders, concerned citizens, and representatives from business, labor, and industry to get together in symposiums, panel discussions, or in any way they want to focus on the problems of the environment.

The teach-in offers the opportunity for a nation-wide educational campaign that involves a wide cross section of the community, establishes better understanding of the problems, and seeks support to clean up the environment.

A national office has opened in Washington, D.C., to organize, plan, and promote the idea.

By the time April 22 arrives, hundreds of campuses will be holding teach-ins. They will be joined by high school students, conservation groups, and community organizations of all types. It will be a massive questioning of why the American rush for progress is permitted to destroy the nation. We now have the capacity and expertise to prevent and reverse the trend of environmental degradation and must make the effort now—in this decade.



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