



# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS SUMMARY

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## IS ADMINISTRATION SABOTAGING ENVIRONMENT?

"Environmental laws will be suspended to permit the development of any project related to 'energy or its uses' if...Nixon's secret strategy is successful," says syndicated columnist Jack Anderson (Wash. Post, 3/12/74). Reports "behind closed doors" meeting where OMB deputy chief Frank Zarb offers Nixon-backed proposal that NEPA be suspended. CEQ head Peterson opposes weakening of Act; Interior Under Secretary John Whitaker (former oil exec) suggests changing environmental guidelines instead of suspending NEPA, to "produce the same result with less uproar." Richard Fairbanks, top Nixon environmental aide, complains of "environmental kooks." "When the lights go out, people don't give a damn about the environment." FEO rep Eric Zausner says his agency needs "a week or so to think it over." ..... "THE WORD IN WASHINGTON," says Newsweek (3/18/74), is that proposed White House amendments to Clean Air Act (see 3/15/74 News Summary) "may drive environmentalists up the wall--and...propel...Train and Quarles right out of the Nixon Administration." Says Quarles: "The...Act needs some flexibility, but some of those...amendments are a signal to the country that the battle for clean air is over, and that EPA is quitting. I won't go along." ..... "MR. TRAIN IS INDISPUTABLY RIGHT and admirably bold" in refusing to support amendments (N.Y. Times, 3/12/74). Extension of cleanup deadline date for power plants (switching from oil to coal) to '84 would "invite scorn and wholesale abandonment of...law." Using high stack method of dispersing SO<sub>x</sub>--instead of installing scrubbers-- "would be a rank surrender to industries reluctant to spend...money or develop...technologies... to clean...the air." To eliminate Fed agency impact statements "would leave the law a 'Hamlet' not just without the Dane but without any of the cast but the ghost." ..... "WE'RE SQUARELY BEHIND THE WHITE HOUSE on the need to review and amend the act," says Wall St. Journal (3/15/74), but paper also sympathizes with Train--says problem could be solved by allowing him to testify in opposition, since no unified Cabinet position needed on this issue. "The chief problem with the...Act", continues Journal, "isn't that it mandated a clear mission to the EPA, nor should an overhaul of the act confuse its mission by requiring Mr. Train to factor the economy, energy needs, etc., into policy...Rather, EPA's exclusive authority to set standards should be withdrawn, and the agency left to administer and enforce standards that are set by some Executive Branch mechanism, one that would have the capacity to balance environmental, economic and social factors."

IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS. "Imagine...a bill being introduced in Congress," says Dayton Daily News (3/3/74), "for a program that would cost \$16 billion a year [with the purpose to make] Americans sick, damage their homes and buildings, kill their trees and make life unpleasant. The bill has never been passed, but we have the program anyway. It's called air pollution. People tend to forget, when they dismiss pollution abatement programs, that not spending money to clean up the environment is being penny wise and dollar foolish. Pollution extracts a cost that is not easily recognized, but is real nonetheless."

EPA ORDERS CHRYSLER RECALL

In first large-scale EPA-ordered recall, agency orders Chrysler to call-back 825,000 '73 cars, 1,000 '74 trucks (Wash. Star-News, 3/6/74). Train says defect--in temperature sensing device that activates exhaust-gas recirculation system--would cause "virtually all" cars to emit NO<sub>x</sub> "considerably above the federal emission standard." Chrysler will comply, but blames agency for forcing production change which caused problem. Similar stories in Wall St. Journal (3/7/74), Wash. Post (3/7/74), N.Y. Times (3/7/74), Baltimore Sun (3/7/74), Milwaukee Journal, Detroit News (3/7/74), Denver Post (3/7/74), Portland Press-Herald, Me., (3/7/74). . . . . EPA SHOULD SHARE part of blame for Chrysler recall, says Wall St. Journal (3/11/74), since agency ordered Chrysler to relocate sensing device in middle of model run--despite Chrysler warning that trouble might ensue. . . . . Fla. Times Union & Jacksonville Journal (3/10/74) echoes Wall St. Journal line, says EPA must regulate, but must not use power "capriciously." "It is incumbent upon the EPA to examine, from start to finish, this entire matter, ascertaining how--if EPA's judgment is here at fault--repetition of such needless wastes can be avoided. If EPA does not, then Congress had best give some thought to regulating its regulator."

IN OTHER AUTO EMISSION DEVELOPMENTS. EPA's John Moran, Research Triangle Park, N.C., warns that sulfate, sulfuric acid emissions from catalytic converters create "officially sanctioned public health risk," since effects not measurable for two years. "I don't feel we know enough about these systems yet." (Air/Water Pollution Report, 3/4/74). Moran's warning quoted by Chrysler Pres. John Riccardo as well as Chrysler's director of Vehicle Emissions Planning (Detroit News, 3/2 & 3/5/74 respectively), as justification for Congress to delay converters.

OMB-ORDERED FUNDING CUT SPARKS OUTRAGE

OMB directive that EPA will "phase out" state, local grants by 7/1/75 (see 3/1/74 News Summary), creates furor in states: Michigan Gov. William Milliken says state programs to clean up air, water pollution "could be badly crippled" (Detroit News, 3/6/74). . . . . MICHIGAN'S TOP ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER says cut "would completely gut our air pollution control program that is just beginning to gear up." Expert researchers, field investigators for State Water Resources Commission "would have to be let go." Detroit News (3/7/74) adds that cut "unlikely ever to get airborne. Administration spokesmen already are backing away" from OMB proposal. . . . . "THIS IS COMPLETE AND TOTAL DISASTER," says Pa.'s environmental protection chief (Pittsburgh Press, 2/27/74). "Neither the state nor the local communities have the financial resources necessary to meet federally mandated programs. It will wreck the whole environmental program in Pennsylvania." Pa. State Rep. John Laudadio, chm., Joint Legislative Committee on Air, Water Pollution, says, "We want every Pennsylvania congressman and senator to oppose this monstrous proposal. This represents nothing less than total distaste(sic) for our state." . . . . Houston Post (2/26/74) reports "shock and disbelief" on part of Texas state, local officials. Texas Air Control Board head says cut "would hamper our program--no question about that." Texas Water Quality Board spokesman says cut would hurt some, but voices doubts that fund cutoff will ever take place--in view of expected storm of protest. . . . . "BOMBSHELL...A CHEAP SHOT," says Director, Nebraska Department of Environmental Control. Evening Journal, Lincoln, (2/27/74) adds that decision will present FY '75-'76 budget problems for DEC.

FEDS MOVE GINGERLY ON COASTAL ZONE ACT

'72 Coastal Zone Management Act, feds "first big venture into controlling land use...is proving a slow and touchy thing to implement," says N.Y. Times (3/2/74). Although program to protect U.S. ocean, inland coastlines 16 months old, "officials have yet to resolve the conflicts between states' rights and Federal objectives that it raised." Natural Resources Defense Council says law's basic emphasis on coastal resource preservation "twisted textually" by Commerce Dept.'s Office of Coastal Environment (which administers law) to give conservation, commercial development equal weight.

IN OTHER COASTAL USE DEVELOPMENTS. Stories on bill to repeal '71 Delaware Coastal Zone Act, nation's first law protecting state coastline from heavy industrial development, appear in Business Week (3/2/74), Wall St. Journal (3/15/74), Philadelphia Inquirer (3/1/74).

OCEAN DUMPING NO THREAT TO JERSEY, SAYS EPA

Commenting on danger of 30-square mile sludge dump 12½ miles off Sandy Hook State Park, N.J., Richard Dewling, dir., surveillance analysis division, Region 2, says, "Ocean dumping is the most economical method of disposing of sludge and hasn't proved to be a health hazard to shore residents. If there is any indication that sludge dumping is threatening the health of even one...Jersey resident--and the charge can be substantiated--then we'll move the site immediately." Adds there has been proof of no "massive" movement of sludge toward shore (Asbury Park Press, 2/25/74).

IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS. Sen. Williams (D-N.J.), original sponsor of ocean dumping law in '72 National Water Quality Standards Act, accuses EPA of failure to take "a sufficiently active role" in banning offshore dumping--endangering recreational waters in Jersey-N.Y. area (N.Y. Daily News, 2/27/74). Assails agency for: (1) 15-month delay in setting tight controls on dumping; (2) failing to establish acceptable testing, analyzing procedures, while permitting "a number" of regional offices to issue dumping permits without publishing reasons; and (3) issuing permits allowing highly toxic waste dumping without requirement that firms involved establish dumping reduction plans or prove no alternative. Bergen County Record (2/27/74) runs similar story.

EPA WARNS PA. ON WEAKENING POLLUTION LAWS

Region 3 Administrator Daniel Snyder warns Pa. legislature that so-called "Bethlehem Steel bills" will weaken state anti-pollution laws, conflict with federal statutes. (Pittsburgh Press, 3/1/74). Specifically, bills would (1) permit industry to challenge Pa. Dept. of Environmental Resources rules in Commonwealth Court before enforcement action taken, and (2) allow facilities due for phase-out within 12 years to continue air, water pollution standard violation during that period. More background on Bethlehem bills in Philadelphia Inquirer (2/25 & 3/6/74), Pittsburgh Press (3/8/74). SOME REACTION TO BILLS: "Virtually would wipe out all the gains made in cleaning up Pennsylvania's air and water in the past 10 years" (Pittsburgh Press, 3/3/74). ..... "IF THESE BILLS ARE PASSED...the whole state will be back in the 1920's" (Pittsburgh Press, 3/10/74). ..... "THE THREE BILLS..." says Pittsburgh Press (3/3/74), "were drafted by lawyers for the Bethlehem Steel Corp. in an undisguised attempt to avoid pollution-cleanup rules affecting an aging part of its Johnstown Works. The steel firm conceded last year that these facilities would be closed down in the near future whether it gets anti-pollution exemptions or not...The stakes are high and the answer is not..."

a simple choice between jobs and a clean environment. It should be possible to have both, without undue hardship for anyone. Big industry, however, seems to think that what's good for Bethlehem Steel is good for Pennsylvania. That's a dubious proposition which the legislature should reject."

#### UTAH DEFIES EPA ON WATER DEADLINES

Utah Water Pollution Committee votes unanimously to defy EPA, extend deadlines for state water quality standards by five years (Salt Lake Tribune, 3/1/74). Action stems from "unforeseen delays" in planning, drastic cuts in fed funds. Committee complains about EPA's lack of cooperation--chairman says he asked agency for "simple statement" outlining interim stream standards, but received "complex" document, "eight pages of gobbledygook." .....Salt Lake Trib (3/2/74) says EPA "a bit unreasonable when it insists Utah, and in all likelihood the other states, adhere to a congressionally mandated schedule that the President has, through impoundment of funds, made impossible to meet. If the EPA really wanted to be helpful it would be pleading with the White House for release of additional money...But such logical action is the complete anti-thesis of bureaucratic action."

#### THOUSANDS MAY DIE FROM RADIATION, SAYS EPA

EPA study reveals upwards of 31,000 persons may die during next 50 years as result of cancer, birth defects attributable to man-made radioactive emissions (Denver Post, 3/3/74). With strict emission controls, however, deaths kept to fewer than 7,000 over 150-yr. period. Study was key document in agency standard-setting--a program transferred to AEC 12/7/73 on orders of OMB's Ash, who said EPA "construed too broadly its responsibilities."



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