YEAR-END REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF EPA

from Russell E. Train, Administrator

December 31, 1974

This year-end report provides me with a welcome opportunity as Administrator to communicate directly with each member of EPA. One of the most unfortunate aspects of my job is the fact that I have so little chance to meet and talk personally with the people who make this Agency work. I find this particularly frustrating because I know what extraordinary talent, creativity and commitment we possess at all levels of our Agency. It is the job each of you does personally that makes all the difference in the success of the Agency. I am grateful to each of you. High performance throughout the Agency reflects the recognition at all levels of the vital nature of EPA's mission.

Another frustration -- pervasive, I suspect, in top management jobs both in and out of government -- is the increasing difficulty of finding time for looking ahead, for identifying the broader social and economic implications of programs, for developing value systems which alone can make actions or analysis truly purposeful, or most simply just finding time for thinking. The issues and problems demanding decision press upon you at a faster and faster rate. The flood of paper consumes your evenings and weekends. The days are filled with meetings -- meetings with your own key staff, Congressional hearings, interagency meetings on energy or other pressing problems, meetings with various public interest groups, meetings with industrial, agricultural and labor groups, meetings with the press, even meetings to brief you on the next meeting.

In between, you travel, to meet and speak with groups in every corner of the country and occasionally abroad. (I often think that we must increasingly substitute communication by satellite and computer for the endless conferences that afflict us. Perhaps growing energy constraints will help promote this development.) Of course, one must not discount the fact that travel time is about the only time you can really read, even read books.

The point of this recitation is not to elicit sympathy, because all of you are beset to some degree by this deeply troubling frustration of our time, a condition which is clearly getting worse rather than better. Management and administration is rapidly becoming a matter of "keeping things moving," and "getting the job done." A position such as mine is sometimes described in the press as a "top policy job." I guess what I am trying to say is that there is damn little time to come to grips with policy in the broadest sense of the term.

This particular frustration is another reason why I welcome the opportunity afforded by this year-end report to step back from the job a bit, to take stock and to look ahead -- even if in fairly brief and imperfect a fashion. (Characteristically, I guess, I am writing these opening paragraphs over the Atlantic, heading for Moscow and a four-day meeting of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Joint Committee on Environmental Cooperation.)

You might think from what I have said so far that I am dissatisfied with my job. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have loved

every minute of the fifteen or more months since I came to EPA. They have been exciting months, months in which our environmental programs have been maturing at the same time as we have been confronted by the energy crisis and deepening economic problems. It has been a time full of controversy, to be sure, but it has not been petty controversy. The issues have been and continue to be very real and basic to our society and its future well-being. That is why EPA is such a challenging place to be. We are at the center of the currents of change that we all sense to be moving deeply and forcefully throughout the world.

Let me say, first, that we have been making positive progress in reversing past trends of environmental deterioration. I say this in full recognition of the fact that we have hardly more than begun the task. New problems confront us almost faster than we can solve the old ones. The longer range world problems of population growth, food, economic development, and resource allocation, among others, seem intractable. Yet, without in any way underestimating the difficulties ahead, I think it is important to recognize the progress we have made.

Over a very short period of time -- short in relation to the historic periods in which our environmental problems have been generated -- we have made excellent progress in developing a strong institutional base for effective environmental management. Since 1968,

at the Federal level, we have created the Environmental Protection Agency; we have brought into being a Council on Environmental Quality; we have created the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; we have seen the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act and the institutionalization of environmental impact analysis throughout the planning and decision-making process of government; we have seen passage of such important legislation as the Clean Air Amendments of 1970, the Resource Recovery Act of 1970, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, the Noise Control Act of 1972, the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuary Act of 1972, the new pesticides regulatory authority embodied in the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act of 1972, the Endangered Species Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, the Port and Waterways Safety Act of 1972, the Endangered Species Act of 1969 and its 1972 amendments, the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, and just recently the Safe Drinking Water Act. Never before in history has a society moved so rapidly and so comprehensively to come to grips with such a complex set of problems.

At the State and local level across the nation, similar developments have been taking place in legislation, ordinances, and governmental organization. Indeed, as you know, we have been looking to State and local governments to share more and more in the responsibility of implementing and enforcing our various environmental programs. I consider this active intergovernmental partnership a key to the future success of our environmental efforts.

Around the globe, country after country has established new governmental mechanisms for more effective environmental management. Departments and ministries of environment are now commonplace. These have been important not only in terms of furthering internal environmental improvement in the particular countries but in providing focal points for more effective environmental cooperation internationally.

Over the past three years, we have seen the conclusion and continuing implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement with Canada (1972), the U.N. Conference on the Human Environment at Stockholm (1972), the agreement at Moscow on a U.S.-U.S.S.R. comprehensive joint program of environmental cooperation (1972), the agreement at London on an ocean dumping convention (1972), the agreement at Paris on the World Heritage Trust convention (1972), the agreement at Washington to limit and control trade in endangered species (1973), the agreement at London on the Convention to Prevent Pollution of the Seas by Vessels (1973), and the bilateral agreements for environmental cooperation with the Federal Republic of Germany and with Poland (1974).

The U.N. Environmental Program has been established at Nairobi. In addition, there is continuing activity within the environment committee of The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) at Paris, the Committee on the Challenges of a Modern Society (CCMS) of NATO, the Law of the Sea meetings, other international organizations such as WHO, WMO, FAO, and UNESCO, as well as bilateral cooperation with Japan, Mexico and other nations, in addition to those already named.

EPA has actively supported all of these efforts to strengthen international environmental cooperation. Whether at Washington headquarters, our regional offices, or our labs, many of you have been making major contributions to the success of this effort. I know this has often meant extra effort above and beyond your normal job. I commend you for your willingness to make that extra contribution. Our resources for international work are limited, and we must necessarily give first priority to our domestic responsibilities. Yet the problems of the environment are global. There is no way that any of us can "go it alone" environmentally. We are all part of a world natural system -- the biosphere -- and the continued healthy functioning of that system is the fundamental prerequisite for all human activity and, indeed, our ultimate survival. I firmly believe that the United States should give strong and positive leadership in international environmental matters -- not to tell others what to do but to share our knowledge and to help strengthen international environmental cooperation. Within that context and consistent with statutory and budgetary requirements, I expect and want EPA to continue its active and effective participation in the international environmental area.

I have been speaking thus far of institutional changes at the governmental level. Certainly of equal and very likely of greater importance have been the changes in the private sector. Industry is making very substantial investments in pollution abatement -- on the order of $6.5 billion in 1974 -- investments which have generally

not been voluntary, but made in response to regulatory requirements, actual or anticipated. At the same time, environmental considerations are more and more becoming a regular part of business planning and decision making. And more and more businesses are finding profit making opportunities in pollution abatement.

Our legal institutions -- thanks in large part to the creative work of the public interest law firms -- have pioneered new approaches to the solution of environmental problems. Indeed, the courts have often been out front of other government institutions in this regard. Court orders have helped overcome bureaucratic inertia and resistance. And, of course, EPA itself has not been immune from such court orders. At times, we have been required by such orders to move at an administrative pace which may have outstripped our ability to do as carefully considered and well-managed a job as we would like. On balance, however, the influence of the courts has been very positive. Responsible citizen action through the judicial process is an effective and often needed tool for holding bureaucratic feet to the fire.

Citizen action through a wide variety of private environmental organizations, whether national, regional, or local in nature, has been the moving force in bringing about environmental reform. It is essential that the vitality of this effort be maintained and strengthened. At this time of economic stringency, it is a matter of great concern to me that financial support of private environmental organizations be sustained. I strongly hope that private foundations will not reduce their support in this vital area.

In a very real sense, the environmental movement in this country can be said to have come of age over the past year. Despite the fact that we have been sorely beset with energy and economic difficulties at precisely the time when the financial and other impacts of our environmental programs were beginning to be felt, the commitment of the American people to environmental progress remained firm. Our strong environmental laws -- in particular, the Clean Air Act -- have withstood strenuous and sustained efforts to weaken them. And if anybody had any doubts about how high the environment ranks among the concerns of the American people, the recent elections should dispel them. Wherever the environment was a prominent or pivotal issue, the electorate came down rather emphatically on the side of environmental protection, irrespective of party.

Even without the external pressures imposed upon us by our energy and economic problems, the short deadlines and the sheer weight and complexity of our workload would have made the past year a difficult one. This is obvious, for example, in our air programs. The Transportation Control Plans, the Indirect Sources and Significant Deterioration Regulations, the New Source Performance Standards, the Regulations for Light-Duty Diesel Trucks and for Motorcycles, the Motor Vehicle Gas Mileage Labeling Program, the Regulations on Low-Lead Gasoline, the Air Quality Maintenance Plans, the Assessment of National Air Quality Trends, the Regulations on the Registration of Fuels, the Hearings and other efforts concerning stack gas scrubbers for controlling

sulfur oxide emissions from power plants -- even this incomplete list of actions during the past year under our air program suggests the magnitude of the effect we were required to undertake.

We have also made major strides in water, pesticides and solid waste. In water, we went a long way toward breaking the log-jam in the construction grants program -- awarding almost $3 billion in grants and reimbursements to cities and towns between September 1973 and August 1974. As of the end of the year, substantially all major dischargers were on a clean-up schedule under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Program (NPDES), and State assumption of responsibility for this program had reached 40 percent. We made substantial progress toward eliminating ocean disposal of those wastes that threaten the marine environment. Over forty dischargers were eliminated, and an additional twenty are scheduled for elmination by 1977. The number of ocean disposal sites in active use have been reduced from 100 to 11. We have now issued effluent guidelines for 30 major industrial categories, and we are well on the way to meeting the 1977 and 1983 industrial discharge goals. Of particular significance were: (1) the increasing role of the states both in the inception and in the implementation of our water programs and plans -- a role whose increase we must and will continue to encourage in every way we can, and (2) the move to assess the overall environmental, social and economic impact of waste water treatment construction as well as to integrate the planning, siting and timing of such construction -- including interceptors -- with state and local land use planning.

In pesticides -- also in the first full year of funding -- we constructed much of the basic framework of regulations and guidelines governing the regulation of pesticides after 1976. We proposed regulations for the re-registration of some 33,000 pesticide products sold in interstate commerce, for registration for the first time of the estimated 14,000 pesticides marketed in intrastate commerce, and for the classification of all pesticides into either "general" or "restricted" use categories. These regulations were developed during the course, and as a result, of extensive interchange with environmental groups, pesticide users and manufacturers, and the scientific community. The final regulations should be issued early in 1975, with Registration Guidelines which spell out registration criteria following shortly thereafter. In October 1976, pesticides classified as restricted may be used only by certified pesticide applicators. We have promulgated minimum standards for certification and are now giving substantial technical assistance to the states to help in training and certifying an estimated 2.75 million farmers and 110,000 commercial applicators. The establishment of a corps of certified applicators will permit the continued availability of valuable pesticides to those who are fully qualified to use them without endangering the nation's public or environmental health.

After formal hearings that began on August 1973, and a careful weighing of the evidence, I suspended in October 1974 all future manufacture of the pesticides Aldrin and Dieldrin on the grounds that

the evidence of their potential to cause cancer in man was too strong to permit their continued use. In November, 1974, I issued a formal Notice of Intent to Cancel for two other major pesticides -- Heptachlor and Chlordane.

The energy crisis, together with our economic difficulties, underscored and enhanced the importance of an all-out effort to expand and improve our ability to recover energy from solid waste. EPA has identified 50 major metropolitan areas where materials and energy recovery is feasible. These areas account for about 66 million annual tons of waste, or more than half of the municipal waste stream. We will continue to try to help these areas make the most of their waste recovery potential. Scheduled for completion and evaluation next year are two major resource recovery demonstration projects -- one using shredded waste as a coal substitute in a St. Louis utility boiler and the other converting solid waste to generate steam for use by a utility in Baltimore. A San Diego demonstration project producing a fuel oil from solid waste will be underway next year. Through these and every other means available to us, we will continue to encourage the reduction and recovery of wastes.

In my confirmation hearings before the Senate, I emphasized my conviction that the Agency's standards and regulations can only be as sound or as strong as the scientific foundation which supports them. The continued strengthening of our research and

development effort, particularly in the area of health effects, remains, in my judgment, a matter of the highest priority. We undertook, over the past year, an intensive review of the management procedures in our Office of Research and Development, which included, at my request, an independent assessment of those procedures by a committee of the National Academy of Sciences. As a result of this review, we are presently at work trying to simplify and streamline R&D management procedures in ways that will enable the Agency to take far more effective advantage of its able and dedicated scientists.

With the basic regulatory machinery increasingly in place, the work of the enforcement division continues to grow in size and significance. During the past year, for example, the suits filed against EPA, and EPA's own enforcement actions in water, were fifteen times the number of the preceding year. The next year and succeeding years will see not only substantial increases in legal and administrative enforcement activity, but an accelerated and more and more sophisticated monitoring and surveillance effort.

These diverse program activities and achievements only suggest the scope and sweep of important work being carried out within the Environmental Protection Agency. I have not, for example, described the critical assignments and very real progress the Agency has made in addressing problems of noise, radiation, ocean dumping, evaluating environmental impact statements, or enforcing equal opportunity requirements. The point I

wish to make is that the work of EPA includes all these elements and many more, and we are moving ahead as a total Agency because of the talent and constant effort of people who work in every one of these program areas.

In sum, we have made good progress in administering an extraordinarily complex set of statutes and regulations which will have far-reaching impacts upon the entire fabric of our society. And we are already starting to see some results.

Recent reports show, for example, that the air in the Philadelphia area has become substantially cleaner in the last few years. In Chicago, sulfur oxides have been reduced by 70 percent over the past six years, and levels are now below the 1975 Federal ambient standard. And concentrations of BOD (biochemical oxygen demand), COD (chemical oxygen demand), bacteria and suspended solids have greatly diminished in 22 major water bodies which drain about 70 percent of our nation's land.

The importance, even urgency, of continuing this progress is underscored by the increasing evidence of the hazards to human health caused by pollution. Scientists, for example, have recently uncovered disturbing evidence that children -- whom we had believed unaffected in any lasting way -- can contract chronic and acute disabilities as a result of air pollution. As many as 20 percent of children in a city such as New York, one study showed, can develop severe and chronic respiratory diseases. Another study in a southern city with relatively heavy air pollution had similar results. Recent

evidence of potential hazards in our drinking water is another case in point.

The more sophisticated and sensitive our monitoring devices become, the more data we accumulate on the health effects of pollutants, the worse things look. Every year we introduce into the commercial market hundreds of new chemical compounds often without any real idea, any serious advance assessment, of their impact on public health. Yet, as we learned through our experience with vinyl chloride, we may not discover how harmful a compound might be until years after it has become a rather commonplace item in our every day life, even a significant factor in our economy. Until we set up a system of advance assessment of these compounds -- as would be established under the Toxic Substances Control Act legislation which the Congress has failed to pass -- we will, in effect, be permitting the people of this country to serve as guinea pigs in a mindless experiment with potentially tragic results for many. I am hopeful that Congress will give high priority to this overdue legislation in the next session.

The profound question that lies at the heart of this issue -- the question, really, that underlies such diverse actions as the decision to deny a permit to E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. to dispose of certain chemical wastes in the Gulf of Mexico, the decision to suspend the manufacture of Aldrin and Dieldrin, and the unresolved court case against Reserve Mining in Minnesota -- is whether the full

presumption of innocence must be extended to these products and compounds unless it can be decisively demonstrated that they are not harmful to humans, or whether we should from now on insist that the presence or introduction of these products and compounds into the human environment must depend upon a determination that they do not constitute unwarranted hazards to human health and life. Our answer to this question will serve as a most accurate measure of our commitment to a safe and sound environment.

We are, as an Agency, far better equipped to meet the challenges before us than we were a year ago. We have, for one thing, learned some rather valuable lessons. Our experience with the transportation control plans and similar measures has, I think, made us all acutely aware of how vital it is -- no matter how short our deadlines -- to get the people affected by our regulations and standards involved at the very start of the process of putting these regulations and standards together. Many of our actions have a very real, sometimes even wrenching, impact upon our society. When EPA proposes transportation control plans for our cities, or rules designed to prevent any significant deterioration of air quality in the nation, it is dealing with very basic economic, social and institutional factors that affect all aspects of our society. Such proposals have important implications for the way of life and the patterns of behavior of individuals, families and communities across the country. It is essential that, in the creation as in the carrying out of such proposals, we involve the public to the greatest extent possible.

This was the path we followed in putting together the court-ordered regulations on significant deterioration regulations, and we must continue to follow it.

The task of establishing and maintaining effective communications with those outside of EPA is one we must all work at constantly. Obviously, there are occasions -- for example, in the enforcement area -- where an "arm's length" posture must be maintained. In the normal case, however, there should be open and effective communication well in advance of proposed actions with those who will be most directly affected. It has been my observation that the failure to do this conscientiously usually leads to misunderstandings that would have been avoided, unnecessary opposition, and overall delay. In addition to communication with regard to specific actions, it is important to maintain regular contact as a matter of course with Federal agency counterparts, State and local governments, as well as with business, agriculture, labor and public interest groups. Likewise, in the research area, it is vital that we be open to and actively seek a free flow of information and ideas from other researchers in both the public and private sectors. Beyond all this, every single employee of the Agency can and should at all times maintain a spirit of responsiveness and helpfulness in all contacts with others. Let none of us forget that we are at all times the servants of the public.

At one point in "Plain Speaking," his oral biography of Harry Truman, Merle Miller asks: "Mr. President, it's been said that the Presidency is the most powerful office in the world. Do you think that's true?"

Mr. Truman responds:

> Oh, no. Oh, my, no. About the biggest power the President has, and I've said this before, is the power to persuade people to do what they ought to without having to be persuaded. There are a lot of other powers written in the Constitution and given to the President, but its that power to persuade people to do what they ought to do anyway that's the biggest. And if the man who is President doesn't understand that, if he thinks he's too big to do the necessary persuading, then he's in for big trouble, and so is the country.

EPA has been granted rather extensive authorities as a result of Congressional and court decisions. I hope that, as a result of our experience over the past year, we have learned well the lesson that all the statutory and court-ordered authority in the world is worth nothing if, by the means and manner in which we carry them out, we do not continue to demonstrate to the people of this country that we deserve their support -- to demonstrate that we are not, in fact, simply another example of the arrogant and arbitrary exercise of bureaucratic power, but rather that we are <u>their own</u> responsive and responsible instrument for achieving a whole and a healthy environment.

It became increasingly clear, over the past year, that EPA's array of programs -- especially in air, water and solid waste -- would

necessarily have a significant impact upon land use patterns in this country. I believe very deeply that, because land use decisions are so critical in determining the quality and character of their lives, the citizens of a given area or region, and their elected officials, must have the strongest possible voice in those decisions. I also believe that those decisions cannot be based upon a single concern or criterion -- whether it be air quality, or housing, or economic development. They must, instead, embrace the broad social, economic and ecological concerns and needs within an area or region. It was largely for these reasons that EPA -- in the significant deterioration regulations it recently issued -- refused to impose, by federal fiat and according to the single criterion of air quality, what would amount to an almost absolute prohibition against growth over vast regions of the nation.

It is also largely for these reasons that I have established, in the Office of the Administrator, two new offices: a small land use coordination office and an office of intergovernmental and regional affairs. Through these offices, and through our regional offices, we should be able to do an increasingly better job of integrating our decisions into the decision-making processes at the state, local and regional levels. We are the most decentralized agency in the Federal government. And that, in my judgment, is one of our greatest sources of strength, for it enables us, in carrying out our responsibilities, to fashion our

regulations, standards and programs from the ground up, rather than from the top down.

We have gone a long way toward opening up our Agency and involving the public as well as officials at other levels of government in our efforts. We have also, in my judgment, demonstrated our willingness to do whatever we reasonably and responsibly can to minimize the adverse impacts of our regulations -- on particular industries as on particular cities, on the nation's economy as on the nation's energy or food supply.

There is every evidence that the public strongly supports our environmental programs and will not be deceived into believing that they are somehow responsible for any significant share of our energy and economic difficulties. Indeed, I think that as a result of our experience over the past year or so the public has increasingly begun to understand that our "environmental" and "pollution" problems are not simply a separate and self-contained category to be dealt with alongside and apart from other separate and self-contained categories of problems such as energy, inflation, food supply and the like. They have begun to understand that our environmental concerns, in a very real sense, underly and encompass a wide range of concerns such as energy, inflation, resources, land use, population, food supply. In great degree, our problems in these areas are simply instances of the classic environmental strains that occur when an organism exceeds

the carrying-capacity of its habitat. They are symptoms of the fact that, in one way or another, we are living beyond our means.

We must, in my view, understand that if we consume our resources at runaway rates, and in wasteful ways, then no matter how fast we run, we must inevitably lose ground in our efforts to keep supply in step with demand. It makes little sense to throw the throttle wide open in the development of our energy and other resources when we waste so much of these resources. In the unrestrained development of these resources, haste really does make waste.

We must build energy conservation measures and habits into our economic system, and into our patterns of physical development and growth. We must also move to increase our supply of energy -- in particular, our supply of clean and renewable sources of energy. At the same time, we must do all we can to put every possible ounce of that energy to productive use and cut down and cut out the unnecessary and inflationary waste within our system and society.

For the foreseeable future, we are going to have to rely mainly upon our supply of fossil fuels -- coal, natural gas and oil. In particular, we are going to have to mine and burn more coal. The more we do so, the more imperative it becomes that we not only refuse to relax public health standards and environmental safeguards, but insist even more strongly upon rigorous standards and safeguards throughout the energy production and consumption cycle.

At the beginning of last year, I expressed my view that the nation had better start facing up to the almost overwhelming reality of the long-range problems of energy, of food and resource supply, of human numbers and of uncontrolled growth. To begin to deal with these problems -- indeed, even to begin to ask the right questions -- we must develop effective institutions within the Federal government for long-range analysis. We were, I pointed out, almost totally lacking in such a capability -- an appalling lack in a nation with as big a stake in the future as the United States.

The really critical issues before this country are not the immediate and isolated ones, but the interrelated and long-range ones -- indeed, the day-to-day "crises" that seem to capture all our attention and consume all our energies are, for the most part, simply manifestations of far deeper problems that we never seem to get around to acknowledging, must less addressing. The old cliches that everything relates to everything else and that we live in an interdependent world have become the fundamental fact of our economic, social and political life. Our economic health and growth, our patterns of settlement and physical development, our social stability and strength -- these both determine and depend upon a vast and intricate system of material (including food), energy and environmental resources. Under these conditions, we cannot hope to come to grips with the issues before us unless we strengthen our ability to assess problems

and programs, not simply in isolation, but in relation to each other; not simply over the short term, but over the longer span of 10, 20 or 30 years.

Without this capacity at the national level, we will never be able to work the kinds of accommodations between demands for and supplies of resources that will enable us to achieve stable and sustainable levels and kinds of growth. We often forget that time itself has become one of our most critical resources. It is not so much coal, or oil, or natural gas that we must worry about running out of. It is time -- time to accomplish the necessary adjustments in our way of life that will allow us to make the most of these resources as well as the necessary investments in the cleaner sources of energy that will enable us to live a decent life without denying it to those who follow us.

We live in a time when, in the fine phrase of Leonard Silk, the long run has become the short run. And we cannot forever get away with acting on the basis of ignorance and expediency. The day-to-day crisis decisions that we make more and more limit our options for the future; yet we make them with almost no understanding of how they impact upon each other, much less of what their implications are over the long-term.

I do not believe the end of the world is at hand, but I do know that the year 2000 is just around the corner. If we expect to solve

the problems of the 1980s and 1990s, we need to start now -- as we should have started some years ago to foresee and forestall the present energy crisis. To the degree that we fail to do so, we foreclose the options open to us.

In an age of resource scarcities and physical constraints, we are going to have to be a lot more choosy than we have been in the past. We no longer have as much room for maneuver and margin for error as we once did. We are, in short, going to have to engage in some serious long-range planning.

With its new budget committees and the Office of Technology Assessment, the Congress has at least the rudiments of the kind of longer-range analytical capability I am thinking of. But nowhere in the Executive Branch is there any real capability for conducting the kind of continuing and comprehensive census of the future that we must have if we are to ensure that the day-to-day decisions we make are, indeed, taking us in the directions we want to go. It is, in my view, a matter of the utmost importance that we create such a capability within the national government. Indeed, as our experience over the past year has amply demonstrated, the development of such a capability at EPA is a matter that must demand our best efforts over the next year.

I do not, as I suggested at the beginning, have much time for leisurely reflection these days. In those moments that do

occur, I find myself more and more thinking of the early Greek philosophers who believed that earth, air, water and fire were the fundamental elements of matter, and of the myth of Prometheus who stole fire from heaven and suffered such endless agony for his pains. I find myself thinking how ironic it would be if the primeval Promethean sin should turn out to be, not man's theft of fire from heaven, but his theft of fire from earth -- his profligate use and abuse of the earth's energy and other resources without regard for the needs of future generations and without respect for the laws and limits of the natural world.

And I remember the passage I once ran across in the diary of the fine Italian writer of more recent times, Cesare Pavese:

> Today, you saw that great hill with its hollows, its clump of trees, the brown, the blue, the houses, and you said: 'It is as it should be.' That is enough for you. It is a place that never changes. Why look for any other? Dwell among these things, let them enfold you, live on them, like air, like a trail of clouds. No one knows that everything is here.

We are learning that everything is here, on this earth; that on this side of life at least, this earth is all we have; and that it will continue to be enough for us only as long as we care enough for it to make it last.

Perhaps the greatest challenge we face, not just in this country but globally, is the need to find new ways -- to fashion, indeed, nothing less than a whole new ethic -- for taking into full account the long-term costs of actions that bring short-term benefits. To put it

another way, we need to learn how to balance our own wants against the needs of future generations.

This challenge expresses, in large measure, what the environmental movement -- and our job -- is all about. I deeply admire and appreciate all you have done to help meet this challenge and to get its message across. I look forward to working with you in the year ahead.