



# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS SUMMARY

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## WHITE HOUSE, TRAIN, LOCK HORNS OVER CLEAN AIR REVISIONS

"I want it known that I am strongly opposed to most of these proposals [Administration amendments to Clean Air Act], says Train, "and I'm going to fight against them to the last wire, because I don't think they're necessary and I do think they'd do substantial harm." (N.Y. Times, 3/11/74). Since Train "held his ground firmly" against OMB, FEO, Domestic Council, introduction of amendments set back till White House yields or forces issue--"and possibly Mr. Train's resignation." "Sources" say Train doesn't threaten resignation--will send proposals to Congress without supporting them. If "push comes to shove," EPA will have "aggressive allies" in Sen. Muskie (D-Me.), "several of his colleagues." Principal revamps feared by Train: (1) Extension of power plant emission deadlines till '84; (2) authorization of tall stack dispersion of sulfur oxide emissions as permanent control device, regardless of emission limitations; (3) requirement that agency consider not only health effects but economic, social impact in standard setting; (4) federal pre-emption of stricter state standards; and (5) exemption of energy-related activities from NEPA impact statement requirements.

IN OTHER AIR DEVELOPMENTS. Federal Power Commission staff report says strict adherence to current air quality standards will cause "critical deficiencies" in U.S. electric power supply in seven of nine "electric reliability" areas by '75; many steam plants could be ordered shut down. Overall reserve picture "affected less" in '77 due to retirement of older units, upgrading of capacity by use of stack scrubbers or environmentally acceptable fuels. Air/Water Pollution Report 3/4/74).....REFLECTING ON FINAL EPA complex source regs (see 2/22/74 News Summary), Indianapolis Star (2/19/74) says, "If the agency is as unrealistic and unreasonable in this area as it has been with auto emission and smokestack controls, American growth could be brought to a screeching halt."

## EPA SLAMMED ON TUSSOCK MOTH DECISION

"Bowling to chemical manufacturers, the timber lobby and the...Forest Service, the E.P.A. has caved in," feels N.Y. Times (3/10/74) (see 3/1/74 News Summary). "The efficacy of DDT against the tussock moth has yet to be demonstrated...But there is no reason to believe that DDT has lost any of its toxic effect on indirect targets...Thanks to its long-lasting quality, it is now to be found alike in the polar bears of the Far North and the penguins of the Far South. Its lethal effect on the reproductive capacity of birds has been amply demonstrated. There are less persistent chemicals that can be used. Their application may be costlier and require more skill, but that is surely no reason for the Government to restore respectability to a known poison."

IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS. Forest Service Chief John McGuire "irritated" by Train remark that Service efforts at finding DDT alternatives "almost totally inadequate--to the point of dereliction" (Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 2/27/74). McGuire: "I see no need for gratuitous insults to our scientific staff." Also displeased that EPA "refused to inform" Service before announcing decision. ....Salem, Ore. Capital Journal

believes EPA "doesn't deserve the swats it's getting for the tussock moth decision... EPA didn't make its decision in a vacuum or on the spot. Plenty of scientists...in other government agencies, and outside government were consulted...the U.S. Forest Service [which now advocates DDT use] was involved, too. Soon after the decision was made, USFS Chief John McGuire told us he and his staff were consulted and participated in the decision. He indicated he concurred in it."

#### MEDIA REACTION TO LAND USE KNIFING

Reponse to "indefinite postponement" of land use bill by House Rules Committee (see 3/1/74 News Summary): "It is a perversion of the democratic process when a handful of men at a strategic point can lightly be allowed to deprive the entire House of an opportunity even to vote on a question of immense national importance" N.Y. Times, 2/28/74). ..... "THIS ARBITRARY MOVE by six Democrats and three Republicans is doubly wrong-headed because it seems to have been based largely on a lack of understanding of land use bill and a susceptibility to the distortions and alarms peddled by the opponents of effective planning" (Wash. Post, 3/4/74). .... "THE ENVIRONMENT WAS dealt another blow ...when the White House and Democrats on the House Rules Committee buckled under pressure from political and special interests and scuttled a land use bill that ...Nixon only a month ago said was of 'high priority.' ...The only explanation for the White House retreat that makes sense is that the President has been losing favor rapidly with conservatives because of Watergate. It is understandable that Mr. Nixon would be seeking ways to get back in their good graces before the vote on impeachment, but it is unfortunate that the environment has to suffer. But ...six of the nine votes to scuttle it came from...Democrats who apparently bowed to pressure from the Chamber of Commerce.. and from construction trade union lobbyists who contended that it might slow construction and cost jobs" (Wash. Star-News, 3/5/74)..... "THE WISE USE of land under today's pressures is essential, and planning to assure the best use is needed. But the power to decide the best use should remain at home and not be placed in the hands of Washington's planners. The committee's decision to defer the bill, therefore, was a victory for the rights of states" (Dallas Morning News, 3/1/74).

IN OTHER LAND USE DEVELOPMENTS. Commenting on land use bill currently before Maryland legislature, Baltimore Sun (3/3/74) says year-old Florida land use law (Land and Water Management Act of 1972) a "success," according to environmentalists, planners, politicians, developers. Fla. Act authorizes state to designate "critical areas" where development highly restricted--developers required to submit project applications to regional planning agency for environmental, social evaluation. Some builders grumble, but many admit application process more uniform, less costly than hassling with patchwork of local zoning regs. Says developers spokesman: "On the whole, it can be of great benefit to developers. Environmental quality is a saleable item." Says Fla. Gov. Reubin Askew: "What is encouraging is that the people of Florida now recognize that we cannot continue in the direction we've been going. There is a growing realization that should Florida lose its vast heritage of environmental wealth, its economic well-being would surely follow as a casualty." .....IN ADDITION TO existing land use program, Miami Herald (2/27/74) reports that new "growth-policy" bill requiring all Fla. cities, counties to plan land use "zipped" through House Environmental Protection Committee--"an excellent first start" says House speaker.

#### MEDIA REACTION TO ATTEMPTED GUTTING OF STRIP MINE BILL

Some response to House Interior Committee defeat of, watered-down, substitute strip mine bill (see 3/2/74 News Summary): "THE MERE TWO-VOTE margin by which this

strong legislation was rescued is a sign, we expect, of harder tests to come...If Congress doesn't summon exceptional nerve to overcome some powerful interests, no adequate law to curb and correct the devastation of strip mining will emerge from this session ...Without a strong federal requirement for reclamation, great expanses of the nation will be scarred beyond recognition, and increasing water pollution will be just one of the side effects" (Wash. Star-News, 3/6/74). ...."IN MOVING FORWARD with comparatively strong strip mine controls, the...Committee gave notice of its awareness that public sentiment does not want the land ravaged for coal...those opposing strong federal controls have been trying to equate opposition to stripping with opposition to coal. But the argument doesn't hold. It is not the use of coal at issue but the use of the land to get it...government figures have estimated that only a small portion of the nation's total coal supply is in strippable land, with the rest overwhelmingly in deep mines" (Wash. Post, 3/6/74).

IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS. "Congress will be guilty of gross negligence," says Pittsburgh Press (2/28/74), "if it waltzes through another year without protecting the nation against savage strip-mining practices...What the strip-mine apologists fail to mention is that far more coal (seven times as much) is available from deep mining than from surface mining."

IN OTHER STRIP MINE DEVELOPMENTS. "Good chance" that environmental groups will appeal U.S. District Court decision that Interior Dept. can grant mining leases in Northern Great Plains region without issuing over-all environmental impact statement (Billings Gazette, 2/20/74).....CALLED AN "ECONOMIC BOMBHELL" by U.S. House Interior Committee researcher, "barely known" study of Eastern Kentucky strip mining by Mathematica (Princeton-based research group) challenges basic claims of coal lobbyists (Louisville Courier-Journal, 3/3/74). Finds mountain mining feasible without dumping strip mine wastes down hillside; documents low cost of new mining techniques. Gist of report contained in bill before Kentucky legislature permitting no more than half of stripping wastes to be dumped on hillsides.

#### HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE BLOCKS MASS TRANSIT RELIEF

House Rules Committee "indefinitely postpones" conference measure providing \$800 million in national operating subsidies pending committee report of Nixon's alternate mass transit bill (see 2/13/74 News Summary) (N.Y. Times, 3/7/74), (Wash. Post, 3/7/74)....."FROM THE BEGINNING," says N.Y. Times (3/8/74), "the urban mass-transit bill was a long shot. The White House, oriented toward conservative "middle America," and the rural-suburban-dominated Congress has provided operating subsidies to farmers, oil men...railroads, airlines and the maritime industry, to name a few. But mass transit, vital to the economy of most larger cities, has been regarded as a sinkhole."....."IN STRATEGIC TERMS," states Wash. Post (3/9/74), the difference between the [Congressional mass-transit] bill and the administration's approach is essentially the difference between a short-term rescue mission and the administration's longer-range reforms in the structure of federal transportation aid...The goals of the administration's plan...are laudable...But if the tortuous course of the 1973 highway-aid act is any guide...the administration will have to show far more willingness to compromise than has been evident to date." ..... "IN SMOTHERING THESE bills [mass transit, land use] and thereby harming the public interest...Nixon and his agents played their destructive part. But the Republicans are outnumbered 10 to 5 on the House Rules Committee. These defeats could hardly have occurred without the connivance of Speaker of the House Carl Albert and the Democratic leadership...As long as this parliamentary anomaly survives in its present form to obstruct bills, delay action and divide responsibility, the House will remain out of order." (N. Y. Times, 3/9/74).

**IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS.** Referring to Nixon's mass transit proposal which gives local communities more flexibility in spending federal funds, Louisville Courier-Journal(2/19/74) says: "This combination of local and state initiative and federal help... is the only practical way to meet the growing need for adequate mass transit service and still maintain a needed sense of local autonomy and responsibility. Few communities, if any, can afford the massive costs of buying and upgrading an existing transit system or starting a new one without outside help. But no community deserves such help unless it is ready to meet a portion of these costs and to underwrite some of the continuing operating deficits out of local pocketbooks."

**IN OTHER MASS TRANSIT DEVELOPMENTS.** The two largest U.S. mass transit organizations, American Transit Association (bus-dominated) and Institute for Rapid Transit (subway, commuter, rail operators), expected to merge into single entity representing all mass transit facets (Wash. Star-News, 2/18/74).

#### DO ECOLOGISTS SEEK EMASCULATION OF AMERICAN BUSINESS?

Syndicated columnist Kevin Phillips in Boston Herald American (1/23/74), under title, "A Second Oil Conspiracy," says: "Since the 1930's, as Old Guard business has lost economic power, leverage has passed to a new set of institutions: Federal, state and local bureaucracies; communication empires; non-profit institutions, centers, and foundations; the so-called 'Poverty-Education...Complex'...Ecologists in the vanguard of blocking oil pipelines or chemical plants tend to be drawn heavily from the ranks of [these institutions]...While coal, oil and steel companies may (and usually do) err on the side of rapacity, such old-line industries tend to be a social force for economic achievement, national pride and military preparedness. In contrast, a society dominated by Harvard the Ford Foundation, CBS, the Washington Post, Common Cause, and so forth can be expected to promulgate the equally self-interested ideology and economics of crypto-humanism."



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