

A View From The Governor's Office

By Gov. Raymond P. Shafer

As Governor, I am deeply proud of the efforts most Pennsylvanians are willing to make, and are making, toward solving our mutual problems.

I have travelled about this Nation and have yet to find a more beautiful natural land of variety than our Commonwealth. And I have yet to find any State making a greater effort to preserve its beauty, natural resources and environment than we are.

We have a \$500 million land and water fund that is now being used to attack the scars and pollution left by irresponsible mining practices; for providing good recreation, for getting the sewage out of our streams.

We have the first and strongest solid waste management law in the Nation for dealing with the junk and garbage of our affluence.

We are ready to begin construction of the Nation's first air pollution monitoring network when a certain State official decides to stop playing politics with it.

We have the Nation's first water pollution monitoring network to help us strengthen the enforcement of our model Clean Streams Law. We also have the toughest strip mining laws among the States.

These are examples of our willingness to work against the problems of the past and meet the challenges of the future.

But I ask myself: Is this really enough? Are we going to win with this kind of an effort?

I read the words of the pessimists, which warn us that for the first time in history, the future of the human race is now in serious question.

If we fail to answer their criticisms in Pennsylvania, it will not be because we didn't try.

It is needless to say that our past history and policy toward control of water pollution was not a noble achievement. The fact that we allowed millions of gallons of acid mine drainage to get into our streams was alone a disgrace.

And even with the efforts we are presently making through the construction of the first acid mine drainage to get into our streams was alone a disgrace.

And even with the efforts we are presently making through the construction of the first acid mine water treatment facilities, through the Sanitary Water Board and other State agencies concerned about pure water, changes are needed.

Last week, at the third of our annual conferences on environment, I asked the experts present to give us the answers to these questions:

—Does the Sanitary Water Board have the tools now needed to assure the quality of our water supply?

—Are the water pollution control concepts and methods developed in the 1930s, and still in existence, adequate to meet the growing demands for pure water?

There is need for improved planning and new water management techniques. Our present system of providing municipal sewage collection and water pollution control is moving too slowly. Consequently, it is not keeping pace with the development of the Commonwealth.

We must now create a State-local partnership of regional systems of water quality management. Communities, industries, builders, and individual citizens must work more cooperatively in a region to assure a pure water supply.

We can no longer allow the proliferation of water treatment facilities along our streams, just as we can no longer permit any community, regardless of size, to dump raw sewage into any body of water.

During the past year, the State's Water Resources Coordinating Committee held a series of meetings to stimulate the formation of watershed associations. We have found that these associations are providing our citizens with a better awareness of regional water problems and a new responsibility to become involved in pollution control efforts.

These associations can give us the basis needed to create regional control of the water supply and bring to an end the era when a hamlet, acting selfishly, can veto the improvement of water quality for other communities.

I know of no greater contribution you can make to the improvement of our environment and the future development of our Commonwealth.

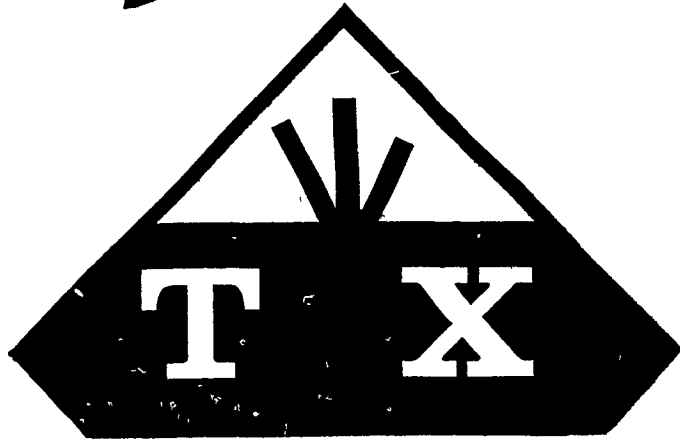
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Mammoth Cheese

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