

Behind the News

Conservation: An Evolving Concept

By ROBERT E. McDERMOTT

Head of the Department of Forest Management

The broad concepts of land resources conservation as conceived by such leaders as T. Roosevelt, Pinchot and Bennett are generally well understood and accepted by a large segment of our society. Within general acceptance of forest management, for example, the forest fire problem is getting to be a phase of the national fire picture in that the major causes are accidental and we no longer find an indifferent attitude when miles of the hills are burning.

No More Crusading

To be sure, the forest fire problem is still with us and the dangers can and do reach catastrophic proportions. Nevertheless, the great crusading days are over. In such subjects as wildlife and soil conservation, we also find that the larger principles have been developed and are generally understood.

In its origins, the conservation movement was something of a reaction to a national guilt complex. There was a sense of shock over our depleted timber resources and the drastic reduction, if not virtual elimination, of some wildlife species. The dust bowl situation focused attention on our dwindling soil resource base.

Over the intervening years, many governmental agencies and lay organizations have most effectively come to grips with these and other large problems to the extent that today the broad parameters of conservation have been defined and many corrective conservation programs are in progress. There are, however, new forces and previously unseen consequences of our expanding population and technological innovations that are changing the resources picture.

This is, above everything else, a prodigal century. It is something of a paradox in that we have established the broad principles of conservation, we are consuming our resources at an increasing rate.

Pollution Possibilities

Overriding this situation is the fact that we have developed an amazing capacity to pollute our environment. We applaud the efforts of many organizations to "Keep America Beautiful (or Green)" or the strident "Don't Be A Litterbug." It is a source of comfort that the appeals are backstopped with the necessary legislation to enforce a fine or penalty system where certain violations occur.

But there is a neat twist of irony here because as we make progress in good outdoor manners, we are becoming uneasily aware of a change in our environment that is of greater consequence than tidiness in public places. This is not to minimize these programs nor the fine progress in the more or less established conservation programs involving forestry, soils management, wildlife management or watershed management. There is no minimizing, however, a growing concern for the maintenance of the total biological environment.

Atmospheric Threats

The development of self-sustained nuclear reactions just 20 years ago has not only given us new weapons and a source of power, but an awesome problem of radioactive debris as well. We have all observed the heavy industrial haze that hangs over our great urban areas and we have come to recognize the environmental dangers of photochemical conversion of hydrocarbons resulting in smog.

We know that in many areas what is coming out of our water taps for domestic use is really a chemical concoction that is not entirely palatable. We recognize vaguely that our

water supplies are subject to a myriad of contamination sources that results in the most outlandish complex of pollutants ranging from sewage to a staggering array of industrial wastes and, most recently, a new array of synthetic chemicals coming off our fields and forests from widespread dissemination of pesticides and herbicides.

This uneasiness and confusion about massive use and disposal of chemicals ranges further from tolerance levels of chemical residues and additives in food to semi-permanent modification of soil characteristics.

We do know that all life exists in a rather fragile relationship to the interactions of environmental factors. Thus, there is a serious mandate to science encompassed in predictions and control of human interventions in nature or the conservation of environment.

Urban Conservation

Conservation has taken other new turns recently. Again, in the realm of environment conservation, we are becoming increasingly aware of the need of breaking up or relieving miles of uninterrupted urban congestion. Great wings of growth have expanded until heretofore relatively separate communities are beginning to merge, and we have projections of continuous urban development and heavy population concentrations of megalopolis.

"Greenbelts" is a fairly recent term that is gaining recognition and acceptance in city planning. This term commonly has the connotation of open or park-like areas, or the retention of blocks of forested land. These undeveloped but orderly areas are thought of as buffers or breaks in these great urban belts.

Recently, however, we see a growing movement to keep the better agricultural land in agricultural production so that these more productive areas are not lost for the future. We are also recognizing that cities can no longer be unattractive work centers in which the economically unfortunate are forced to live and where the more fortunate earn a living and do not choose to live.

We are learning that cities can be developed consistent with the necessity of and desirability of urbanization with the full implications of the word "civilization" and also provide natural beauty and charm.

Another example of an evolving conservation concept may be found in the greatly increased interest and participation in outdoor recreation since World War II. More people, with more money, with more leisure time, are traveling over more highways with the resulting heavy use of our recreational areas.

Destruction Through Overuse

In most respects, this is a most commendable situation except that there is an old axiom which quickly asserts itself . . . "Outdoor recreation tends to destroy itself." That is, we commonly develop outdoor recreation facilities in the most attractive, if not most unique, areas we have and then proceed to overuse them to the extent that we reduce or destroy the original aesthetic value.

Here again, we are beginning to recognize and gauge a series of compromises that must be made between degree of development and use and retention of difficult to measure but nonetheless real environmental factors.

So it is that conservation is an evolving concept that rests on the principle of wise use with recognition and evaluation of the total biological environment.

TODAY ON CAMPUS

Record Hop

The closing time for the West Halls Record Hop is 12:30 a.m. rather than 1:30 a.m., as stated in an advertisement yesterday.

Activity Cards

All women students who have not filled out activity cards may do so in 105 Old Main.

Jazz Mass Record

The record, "Jazz Mass," will be heard and discussed at the Presbyterian University Fellow-

ship at 7:30 p.m. in the fireside room of the student center, 132 W. Beaver Ave.

Hillel Speaker

Isaac Sinai, writer, will speak on the critical immigration and refugee problems facing the 1963 United Jewish Appeal at services at 8 p.m. at the Hillel Foundation.

Artists Series

"The Turn of the Screw," sponsored by the Artists Series, will be presented at 8:30 p.m. in Schwab.

All student tickets have been distributed.

Colloquium

Charles A. Ross, of the Illinois State Geological Survey, will speak on "Evolutionary Paleontology as a Geologic Tool" at the Mineral Industries Colloquium at 3:45 p.m. in the M.I. auditorium.

Spring Week Positions

Applications for Spring Week positions are to be turned in by tomorrow to the Hetzel Union desk. Applications are available at the IUB desk and through the Men's Residence Council, the Association of Women Students and fraternities.

Approximately 200 people are needed to work in the Spring Casino, Peter Lockhart, Spring Week chairman, said recently.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires on group participation in Spring Week are now being distributed and are to be returned by Feb. 15.

Prof Named to Commission

Melvin W. Isenberg, professor of architectural engineering, has been named to serve in 1963 on the Planning Committee on Fire Safety to Life and Fire Protection of Buildings, a committee of the Building Research Institute.

Cold Wave Forecast For Today; Light Snow Possible Tomorrow

By JOEL MYERS

Canadian air masses began a renewed assault on the United States last night as frigid arctic air began invading the north-eastern part of the nation.

Temperatures in Pennsylvania were expected to respond rapidly to the new intrusion of arctic air. A low of 10 degrees was seen for this morning and a high of 12 is indicated for this afternoon.

TONIGHT'S LOW will be zero or below.

Gusty northerly winds and occasional snow flurries should accompany the very cold weather.

The complexion of the weather map has changed radically during the past two days and a new cold weather regime appears to be becoming established. Temperatures are expected to remain well below normal through the weekend and into next week.

Snow is likely tomorrow, and there is some chance of a few

inches of snow accumulating by Sunday.

A storm moving rapidly south-eastward across the central states is forecast to generate a band of precipitation in the Mississippi Valley today. Snow is expected to move toward the Commonwealth from that area tonight and tomorrow.

THE FORECAST for this area calls for a cold wave today. It will be partly cloudy, windy and very cold with a few snow flurries.

Tonight should be partly cloudy to clear and quite cold.

Snow, gusty winds and very cold temperatures are seen for tomorrow and tomorrow evening.

"We do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics minds his own business. We say he has no business here at all."
—Pericles—

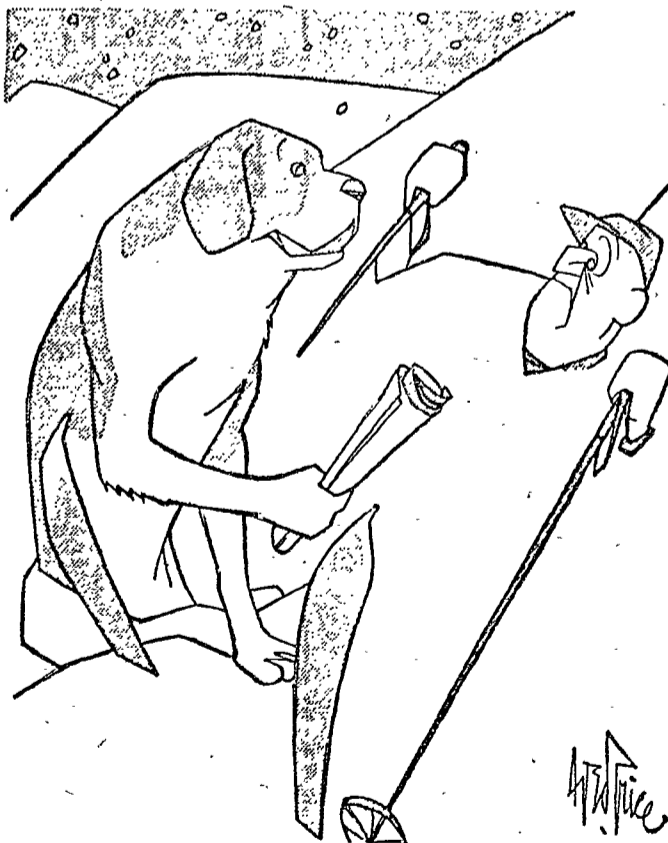
Women's Debate

"AT HOME" Memorial Lounge at the Chapel FRIDAY Afternoon --- 3-5 P.M.

Conversation — Open Fire

Refreshments — Music

EVERYONE IS INVITED



Are you keeping posted?

Most people know that their electric service comes from a business owned by investors—owned by thousands of people like you and your neighbors. It does not come from government—not the city, not the state. Do you know it, too?

WEST PENN POWER

Investor-owned, tax-paying — serving WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA



Milton Himmelfarb

"The Alienation of The Jewish Intellectual"

MILTON HIMMELFARB
Contributing Editor of
Commentary Magazine

will speak

Sunday,
February 10

8:00 p.m.

Hillel
Foundation
224 Locust Lane

Sponsored by Hillel
Graduate Association

FREE
OPEN TO ALL